



COMMERCE TRAVEL REGULATION

CHAPTERS 300 TO 304

INTERIM DRAFT

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COMMERCE TRAVEL REGULATION (CTR) - INTERIM DRAFT

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Subchapter A--Introduction

PART 300-1--THE COMMERCE TRAVEL REGULATION (CTR)

300-1.1a What is the Commerce Travel Regulation (CTR)?

The CTR is issued in accordance with the General Services Administration's Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) and under the authority of Department Administrative Order (DAO) 200-0. The CTR supplements and is used in conjunction with the FTR. Authorization to travel shall conform to the provisions of the FTR, CTR and bureau regulations.

300-1.3 Where can I find travel information on the Internet?

You can find travel information at the following Internet sites:

Airline Itinerary Printout (Sabre system): <http://www.virtuallythere.com>

ATM Locator: http://visaatm.infonow.net/bin/findNow?CLIENT_ID=VISA

Centers for Disease Control (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>

Citibank Website: <http://www.citibank.com>

Currency Converter: <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>

Department of State: <http://travel.state.gov/>

DOC Travel Information: <http://www.osc.doc.gov/oas/travel/default.htm>

GSA Website: <http://www.gsa.gov/> (Click on the Policy tab, then click on Travel)

Air Travel City Pairs

Lodging

Per Diem Rates

Travel Agents

Travel Charge Card

Travel Management Centers

Travel Related Services

Federal Travel Regulation

Hotel/Motel Fire Safety Act/Listings

Hotel/Motel Fire Safety Act: <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/>

Mileage and Map Information: <http://www.mapquest.com>

**PART 300-4--TRAVEL FORMS AND CITIBANK GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CARD
PACKAGE**

Many forms can be accessed electronically by selecting the following links. Forms not available electronically can be obtained from your bureau travel contact or the DOC travel coordinator at (202) 482-1818. The Citibank Government Travel Card Package includes 300-4(a) - 300-4(m)

300-4 Travel Forms and Citibank Government Travel Card Package

300-4(a) Citibank Government Travel Card Requirements

Employees applying for the Citibank Government travel card must:

1. Read and abide by “Citibank Government Travel Card Responsibilities” and cardholder training;
2. Fill out and sign the “Employee/Approving Official Acknowledgment Statement”; and
3. Fill out and sign the “Citibank Government Travel Card Application”.

Approving Officials must:

1. Sign the “Employee/Approving Official Acknowledgment Statement”.

Once completed and signed, the “Citibank Government Travel Card Application” and the “Employee/Approving Official Acknowledgment Statement” is submitted to your servicing Agency Program Coordinator (APC) for processing.

300-4(b) Citibank Government Travel Card Instructions

Complete only the following sections of the application available from your APC:

SECTION II Cardholder Information.

Print or type on the line above requested information. Blocks must contain the employee's complete name, Agency/Organization Name, Verification Information (mother's maiden name), 4th Line Embossing (remains blank), Social Security Number, Home Mailing Address, Home Phone Number, Business Mailing Address, Business Phone Number, Email Address, City Pair Program (circle "yes"), Fax Number, Discretionary Codes 1, 2, and 3 (leave blank), Master Accounting Code (leave blank).

SECTION VI Cardholder Signature.

The employee should read the information contained in the signature block, as well as sign and date the signature block if he/she understands the terms and conditions for issuance and use of the card. Employee should make a copy of the application for his/her records and submit the original application to your servicing APC.

SECTION VII Agency/Organization Program Coordinator Signature.

This section is to be completed and signed **only** by the APC. The APC must sign the application and forward it to the contractor.

300-4©) Where can I obtain a Citibank Government Travel Card Application?

Contact your operating unit's APC, or call (202) 482-1818 for information on the process to obtain the Travel Card Application.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT AND
APPROVING OFFICIAL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I certify that I (1) have received, read and understand the policies and procedures prescribed by the DOC Travel Handbook issued by the Director for Administrative Services, pertaining to the Contractor-Issued Government Travel Charge Card Program; (2) shall abide by such policies, procedures, and other instructions as may be issued by the Department, my bureau/operating unit and the contractor/card issuer concerning the use of the card issued to me; and (3) acknowledge that the card is to be used **only** for expenses incurred incident to officially authorized Government travel.

(1)

Employee Signature and Date

Name (Type or Print)

Title

Organization and Bureau

(2)

Approving Official/Supervisor Signature and Date

Name (Type or Print)

Title

Telephone Number

NOTE TO EMPLOYEE: Your charge card application will not be processed unless accompanied by this completed and signed form.

NOTE TO APPROVING OFFICIAL/SUPERVISOR: Your signature certifies that this employee is authorized to obtain the contractor-issued Government travel charge card. You will be notified of any inappropriate charges or if the employee's account becomes delinquent.

300-4(e) PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

The following information is provided to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a):

The information requested on the card application form is collected pursuant to Executive Order 9397 and 5 U.S.C. Chapter 57 (as amended) for the purposes of recording travel expenses incurred by the employee and to claim entitlements and allowances as prescribed in the CTR. The purpose of the collection of this information is to provide Government agencies necessary information on the GSA travel card contract which provides travelers with charge cards for official travel and related expenses, attendant operational and control support, and management information reports for expense control.

Routine uses which may be made of the collected information and other account information in the system of records entitled "Travel Charge Card Program GSA/GOVT-3" are as follows: (1) transfers to appropriate Federal, State, local, or foreign agencies when relevant to civil, criminal, administrative, or regulatory investigations; (2) pursuant to a request of another Federal agency in connection with hiring, retention, issuing a security clearance, reporting an employee investigation, clarifying a job, letter or contract or issuing a license, grant, or other benefit; (3) to a Member of Congress or to a Congressional Staff Member in response to an inquiry of the Congressional Office made at the request of the individual about whom the record is maintained; (4) to officials of labor organizations when necessary to their duties of exclusive representation; (5) to a Federal agency for accumulating reporting data and monitoring the system; (6) GSA contract travel agents assigned to agencies for billing of travel expenses; (7) listing, reports, and records to GSA by the contractor to conduct audits of carrier charges to the Government; and (8) any other use specified by GSA in the system of records entitled "Travel Charge Card Program GSA/GOVT-3," as published in the Federal Register periodically by GSA. The information requested is not mandatory. Failure to provide the information will nullify the application, and a charge card will not be issued to the employee.

300-4(f) CITIBANK GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CARD RESPONSIBILITIES

What are the employee's responsibilities for the Citibank Government travel card?

Employees responsibilities are:

- a) To take the GSA online training course for travel cardholders which is available at fss.gsa.gov/gsa-smartpay/traveltraining (copy and paste link into your web browser to access the page) and obtain a completion certificate.
- b) To complete the employee information on the charge card application and sign the application.
- c) To complete and sign the Employee Acknowledgment Statement which acknowledges that the employee has received, read, and understands these policies and procedures related to the use of the charge card which states that the card shall be used only while on official travel and not for personal use or use at or in the vicinity of the official duty station or residence unless the use is related to approved official travel. Obtain the signature of the approving official or immediate supervisor on the Employee Acknowledgment Statement.
- d) To forward the charge card application, cardholder training completion certificate, and Employee Acknowledgment Statement to their servicing APC for processing. If the APC is unknown, call the Departmental Program Coordinator, Office of Administrative Services, (202) 482-1818.
- e) To agree to the terms and conditions of the Citibank Government travel cardholder Agreement that is received with the card.
- f) To observe the following guidelines regarding the security of the charge card:
 - 1) Exercise the same care and responsibility for the security of the charge card and number as he/she would with a personal charge card. The charge card will be sent to either the employee's home or office address as indicated on the charge card application.
 - 2) Exercise security of the charge card by not allowing a secretary, an administrative assistant, a supervisor, or any other employee or any individual other than the card holder to store or keep the card.
 - 3) Exercise caution and care in giving the charge card number to another employee to make travel arrangements on their behalf and when giving signature-on-file authorizations to TMC.
- g) To obtain cash advances from automatic teller machines (ATMs) or directly from a bank bearing the Visa logo in lieu of receiving advances from an imprest fund or finance office. ATM withdrawals should be limited to the meals and incidental expense rate (M&IE) for the location

of the temporary duty location and other anticipated cash expenses that cannot be charged to the charge card. Employees are personally liable for cash advances obtained from an ATM even when the advance is lost or stolen.

h) To contact their APC to find out what the established weekly cash withdrawal limits are for their bureau. If the limit will not meet the employee's needs, it can be increased on a case-by-case basis. Employees must contact their servicing APC to request an increase. Cardholders will be charged an ATM transaction fee by Citibank of 1.25% of the amount withdrawn which is reimbursable as a miscellaneous expense on the travel voucher. For ATM locations, call 1-800-CITIATM. In lieu of using the ATM, employees may use their charge card to obtain cash from a teller in any bank bearing the Visa logo.

Cardholders will be issued Personal Identification Numbers (PIN) by the Citibank. If an employee does not receive a PIN, does not remember the PIN, or wishes to change the PIN, he/she should call Citibank at 1-800-790-7206, toll free in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas to receive a form that should be completed and submitted to Citibank.

I) To charge lodging, meals (where possible), automobile rentals, gasoline, and other travel related expenses on their charge card. Personal and family member use of the card and purchases made in retail stores are **strictly forbidden**. However, common or shared services or facilities, i.e., rooms, meals, etc., with family members may be charged to the card while on official travel. This does not apply to common carrier tickets. Only your official portion of the charged expense may be claimed on the travel voucher. NOTE: Use of the Citibank Government travel card at or in the vicinity of your Official Duty Station (ODS) or residence is **strictly forbidden** unless its use is in connection with official travel.

j) To obey rules and regulations governing official travel posted on the Citibank web page, including use of the Government city-pair fares, American-Flag carriers, or Travel Management Center (TMC).

k) To procure common carrier transportation through a centrally-billed account (GTA) established with Citibank. However, employees are authorized to use their charge card to obtain common carrier tickets from the TMC. If the employee does not personally pick up the tickets and present his/her charge card, he/she shall complete a signature-on-file form to authorize the TMC to charge the transportation to his/her charge card. Charging tickets more than a week in advance should be avoided unless it is necessary to obtain a discount fare. Otherwise, a situation may develop where an employee receives his/her charge card bill for the ticket prior to receiving a reimbursement check for the travel.

l) To submit their travel vouchers to their servicing payment office within five (5) working days after the completion of travel. In most cases, employees will be reimbursed for their expenses

before payment is due to Citibank. The cost of common carrier transportation purchased with the individually-billed charge card shall be itemized on the travel voucher. The original passenger ticket coupon for common carrier transportation (plane, bus, train) must be attached to the travel voucher. Claims for transportation must be limited to the amount of the ticket used and should not include any unused portion of the ticket. Adherence to this policy will ensure that the employee receives reimbursement from the Department in sufficient time to pay the charge card bill.

m) To comply with the following guidelines and procedures regarding the payment of the monthly charge card bills:

1) A monthly billing statement from Citibank will be sent to the employee. A statement will be issued when expenditures are incurred or when a credit is posted to the account. If a statement is not received, the employee should contact Citibank at 1-800-790-7206 in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas.

2) Payment, in full, is due and payable to Citibank upon receipt of the statement but must be received by Citibank no later than 25 calendar days from the closing date on the statement in which the charge appeared. **The employee is personally liable for all charges which have been incurred, regardless of whether they have been reimbursed by their Agency or regardless of whether they exceed the amount reimbursable under Department travel regulations.**

3) Conform with Employee Responsibilities and Conduct, 15 CFR 0.735-16, **which requires** Department of Commerce employees to pay each just financial obligation in a proper and timely manner. Corrective actions (cancellation of the card and/or disciplinary action) may be taken by the employee's supervisor if the employee fails to pay the bill in a proper and timely manner or uses the card for non-official purposes. Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-751 contains penalty guidelines for disciplinary action which ranges from written reprimand to removal from Federal service for violation of this conduct standard.

4) If the charge card bill contains a disputed charge, it is the employee's responsibility to contact Citibank at 1-800-790-7206 in the continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas. Citibank will need to know the following:

- Employee's name and account number
- Reference number of the disputed charges
- Establishment where charge was incurred
- Amount of charge
- Statement date

With this information, research can generally be conducted within a few days to resolve the problem.

n) To report your lost or stolen charge card **immediately** to Citibank, 24 hours a day, even if the card number is not known. Call Citibank at 1-800-790-7206, toll free in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas.

The employee is not liable for any fraudulent charges if the card is lost or stolen provided they promptly notify Citibank. The employee will be required to review any charges considered fraudulent and sign an affidavit of forgery stating he/she did not make the charges. All charges will be the employee's responsibility should he/she refuse to sign the affidavit.

A replacement charge card will be issued within 24 hours of notification, if the card has been lost or stolen in the United States, and within 48 hours of notification abroad. The card will be mailed to the cardholders billing address and should arrive in 7-10 days after the loss has been reported. If the employee is traveling and needs a card replaced immediately, Citibank will work with the employee to identify the best replacement option.

o) To notify his/her APC when he/she is transferring between bureaus/operating units within the Department. This notification is necessary in order for internal management reports and mailing addresses to be kept current. A new card will not be issued when the employee transfers within the Department. The APC of the losing bureau should notify Citibank to transfer the card and also notify the APC of the gaining bureau.

p) To return the card, cut in half, and give to his/her supervisor or the APC for cancellation when leaving, retiring, or transferring to another Government agency. If the coordinator is unknown, call the Departmental Coordinator in the Office of Administrative Services, Office of Administrative Operations on (202) 482-1818. **(Similar information is available in Section 301-51.)**

300-4(g) CITIBANK GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CARD RIGHTS

What are the employee's rights in regard to the charge card program?

Under the terms of its contract with the General Services Administration, Citibank **may not**:

- a) Conduct credit checks on employees designated to receive Government charge cards, unless specifically requested by a Federal agency.
- b) Release credit information to other than authorized employing agency officials or the individual cardholder.
- c) Sell or otherwise provide employee names or addresses to other commercial interests.
- d) Charge membership or interest.
- e) Include commercial advertisements or other forms of solicitation with monthly billing statements.
- f) Issue or cancel employees' cards without notifying the APC.
- g) Hold employees liable for any charges made with lost or stolen cards, provided the employee notifies Citibank promptly upon discovering that his/her card has been lost or stolen and signs an affidavit, if required by Citibank, stating he/she did not make the charges.

(See Section 301-51.16)

300-4(h) CITIBANK SUSPENSION AND CANCELLATION PROCEDURES

What are Citibank's suspension procedures?

Citibank will notify the cardholder when payment for the undisputed amount of the account has not been received 45 days from the closing date on the billing statement in which the charge appeared. If payment has not been received 55 calendar days from the closing date, the cardholder and the APC will be notified that suspension procedures will be initiated. The cardholder's account will be suspended if payment for the undisputed amount has not been received 61 calendar days from the closing date, unless directed by the APC. Upon payment of the undisputed amount, the account will be reinstated.

What are Citibank's cancellation procedures?

If payment of the undisputed amount has not been received by Citibank 120 calendar days from the closing date on the billing statement, Citibank will notify the cardholder and the APC that cancellation procedures will be initiated. The account will be canceled 126 days from the closing date on the billing statement, unless otherwise directed by the APC. The employee will be charged a late fee of 2.5% per month on the entire undisputed balance until payment is received. If the employee's account is canceled at this time, their accounts may be reported to the national credit bureaus.

What are Citibank's reinstatement procedures for cancelled accounts?

At the discretion of Citibank, canceled accounts may be reinstated upon payment of the undisputed amount, including late fees. Citibank may conduct a credit worthiness check prior to reinstatement of a canceled account. Employees may also be charged a reinstatement fee.

Can bureau managers, APCs, or any other official override Citibank's corporate policy regarding suspension, cancellation, and reinstatement procedures?

Generally, bureau managers, APCs, or any other official cannot override Citibank's corporate policy regarding suspension, cancellation, and reinstatement procedures, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

(See Sections 301-51.18 through 301-51.21)

CITIBANK GOVERNMENT PURCHASE OR TRAVEL CARD MAINTENANCE FORM

The form CB004 can be obtained at:

<http://www.citibank.com/cashtradetresury/homepage/wccm/commcards/govt/reference/appendixb.htm>

FLY AMERICA ACT JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

The Fly America Act requires Federal employees and others performing U.S. Government-financed travel to use U.S. flag carriers unless U.S. carriers are unavailable. A valid justification statement must be attached to the travel order when foreign carriers are used. The following is a guide for preparing the required justification statement.

I certify that it (is/was) necessary for

Traveler: _____

to use (foreign flag carrier name) _____

Flight/vessel identification number _____

or to transport (personal effects/freight) _____

between _____ and _____

enroute from _____ to _____

on (day and date) _____

for the following reason: _____

Signature of Traveler: _____

Title/Position: _____

Organization: _____

Date: _____

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300-5(a)

PART 300-5–CD 29, Travel Order, Completion Instructions and Travel Order Codes

300-5(a) How do I fill out the Form CD-29, Travel Order (travel order)?

Fill out the travel order as follows:

- Block 1: Indicate temporary duty travel or relocation
- Block 2: Indicate a travel order number which will be issued within each bureau in accordance with respective bureau’s travel order numbering structure.
- Block 3A: Indicate the name of the employing bureau—if not a Government employee, enter the sponsoring bureau.
- Block 3B: Indicate your present official duty station— place in which you are employed.
- Block 4A: Indicate your full name, including middle initial.
- Block 4B: Indicate your title. If the traveler is a private person, or from another organization, indicate “invitational traveler”.
- Block 4C: Indicate your social security number.
- Block 5: Indicate the purpose of your trip.
- Block 6A: Indicate type of travel code. See 300-5(b) for type of travel codes.
- Block 6B: Indicate purpose of trip code. See 300-5(c) for purpose of trip codes.
- Block 6C: Indicate bureau code. See 300-5(d) for bureau codes.
- Block 7: Indicate all points where official duty is to be performed. **Only official points** of travel will be indicated in Block 7.
- Block 8A: Indicate when the employee will depart for official travel.
- Block 8B: Indicate when the employee will return from official travel.
- Block 9: Indicate your organization’s requisition number.
- Block 10: Record the applicable accounting code that is to be charged.
If travel spans two fiscal years, indicate the first year in Block 10 and the second year in Block 15.
- Block 11: Indicate **main mode** of transportation to be used. NOTE: If you were not authorized to use a privately-owned vehicle (POV) but elect to use a POV, you will be reimbursed for mileage plus per diem, not to exceed the authorized method of common carrier transportation cost plus per diem.
- Acct. Office Indicate the address of the payment center when transportation is billed directly to Address: the Government.
- Block 12A: Indicate transportation billed directly to the Government.
- Block 12B: Indicate all other transportation, per diem, and other (miscellaneous) expenses, and totals.
- Block 13: Indicate per diem rates authorized, both lodging and M&IE. Rate established and specially approved must be justified in Block 15.
- Block 14: Indicate any other necessary expenses.
- Block 15: Indicate any special provisions/remarks, such as, authorized leave, when meals are provided at no cost to the Government, justification for rental car, or justification for actual subsistence expenses, etc.
- Block 16: Signature of requesting/approving official
- Block 17: Signature of authorizing official. The authorizing official must be delegated, in writing, the authority to authorize travel.

300-5(b) What type of travel code do I use when preparing my travel order?

Indicate the applicable type of travel code in block 6A of the travel order:

1. Domestic – Travel within the limits of the Continental United States (the 48 states plus the District of Columbia).
2. Foreign – Travel outside the 50 states or territories and possessions of the U.S. and travel within the U.S. directly connected with such travel, except local travel of employees stationed abroad.
3. Transfer/Househunt – Travel authorized for purpose of seeking permanent resident quarters in conjunction with transfer of station.
4. Transfer/Other – Travel authorized for purpose of relocation to a new official duty station.
5. Other – Travel beyond the limits of the conterminous U.S. (Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and possessions of the U.S. such as American Samoa, Midway Islands, and Virgin Islands).

300-5(c) What purpose code do I use when preparing my travel order?

Indicate the applicable purpose code in block 6B of the travel order:

1. Program – Site Visit: Visit to a particular site in order to personally perform operational or managerial activities; e.g., oversee programs, grant operations or management activities for internal control purposes; carry out an audit, inspection, or repair activity; conduct negotiations; provide instructions; provide technical assistance.
2. Administrative – Information Meeting: Attend a meeting to discuss general agency operations, review status reports, or discuss topics of general interest. If a site visit was conducted as part of the same trip, consider the entire trip to be a site visit.
3. Administrative – Training Attendance: To receive training.
4. Administrative – Speech or presentation: To make a speech or a presentation, deliver a paper, or otherwise take part in a formal program other than a training course.
5. Administrative – Conference Attendance: To attend a conference, convention, seminar, or symposium for purposes of observation or education only with no formal role in the proceedings
6. Program – Relocation: To move from one official duty station to another (same as a Permanent Change of Station move).
7. Administrative – Entitlement Travel: Travel to which an employee (or dependent) is entitled as a result of an assignment; e.g., official vacation or home leave; medical, emergency, and education travel.
8. Program – Special Mission Travel: To carry out a special agency mission; e.g., non-combat military unit movements; provide Security to a person or a shipment (such as a diplomatic pouch); moving witnesses from residence to other locations.
9. Administrative – Other Travel: To travel for reasons (purposes)

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- which are not shown in one of the other 8 categories listed above.
10. Administrative – Emergency Travel: Travel to return an employee from a temporary assignment location at Government expense to his/her designated post of duty or home, or other alternate location, where he/she would normally be present to take care of the emergency situation if the Government had not directed or assigned the employee to another location to perform official business.

What bureau code do I use when preparing my travel order?

Indicate the applicable bureau code in block 6C of the travel order:

- 51.....Office of the Secretary
- 59.....Minority Business Development Agency
- 04.....Bureau of the Census
- 05.....National Telecommunications and Information Administration
- 06.....National Institute of Standards and Technology
- 08.....National Technical Information Service
- 10.....Patent and Trademark Administration
- 12.....International Trade Administration
- 14.....National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- 65.....Economics and Statistics Administration
- 53.....Bureau of Economic Analysis
- 52.....Economic Development Administration
- 33.....Technology Administration
- 64.....Office of the Inspector General
- 13.....Bureau of Industry and Security

300-6 Acronyms

APC	Agency Program Coordinator
ARC	Airline Reporting Corporation
ASC	Administrative Service Center
ATM	Automatic Teller Machine
CBL	Commercial Bill of Lading
CD	Commerce Department
CDC	Center for Disease Control
CFO/ASA	Chief Financial Officer/Assistant Secretary for Administration
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CONUS	Continental United States
CTR	Commerce Travel Regulation
DAO	Department Administrative Order
DOC	Department of Commerce
ERC	Employee Relocation Council
FSN	Foreign Service National
FTR	Federal Travel Regulation
GARS	Government Administrative Rate Supplement
GSA	General Services Administration
GTA	Government Travel Account – centrally billed account
GTR	Government Transfer Request
HHG	Household Goods
M&IE	Meals & incidental expense
OAS	Office of Administrative Services
OAQ	Office of Administrative Operations
ODS	Official Duty Station
OGC	Office of General Counsel
OSEC	Office of the Secretary
PBP&E	Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
PIN	Personal Identification Number
RIT	Relocation Income Tax
RSC	Relocation Services Coordinator
SF	Standard Form
SDDC	Surface Deployment and Distribution Command
TDY	Temporary Duty Travel
USC	United States Code
WAE	When Actually Employed

CHAPTER 301–TEMPORARY DUTY (TDY) TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

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Subchapter A—Introduction

PART 301-1--APPLICABILITY

301-1.1(a) What is a Bureau for purposes of TDY allowances?

A Bureau is an organizational entity within the Department of Commerce (DOC) (e.g., the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Bureau of Census (Census), etc.).

301-1.2(b)&(c)(1) What travel allowances are invitational travelers and experts or consultants paid on a daily when-actually-employed (WAE) basis entitled to receive?

Invitational travelers and experts or consultants paid on a daily WAE basis are held to the same rules and regulations as DOC employees and are therefore entitled to the same travel allowances as DOC employees, i.e., lodging and M&IE not to exceed the maximum per diem rates. Additionally, invitational travelers are entitled to receive per diem at their place of employment or service. This includes expenses for commuting from their residence to their place of employment if the intermittent employment causes additional expenses that would not otherwise have been incurred.

NOTE: Invitational travelers are required to procure common carrier transportation through a servicing Travel Management Center (TMC).

301-1.2(b)&(c)(2) Are invitational travelers and experts or consultants paid on a daily WAE basis entitled to receive travel advances?

Yes. Invitational travelers and experts or consultants paid on a daily WAE basis are entitled to receive travel advances. The official authorizing the advance must ensure that the amount advanced is reasonable under the circumstances and that a travel voucher and/or check is submitted to clear the advance within 5 working days after the completion of travel.

301-1.2(b)&(c)(3) How can we ensure that invitational travelers follow the same rules that a DOC employee follows?

Officials authorizing invitational travel orders should ensure, at the time the invitation is extended, that the traveler is aware that all of the travel arrangements are being made by DOC. This is to prevent the invitational traveler from purchasing transportation with personal funds.

301-1.4 What types of employees are subject to different regulations?

The following types of employees are subject to different regulations:

- (a) Travelers on loan or detail to another department will follow the paying agency's regulations.
- (b) Travel by NOAA Commissioned Officers will be in accordance with the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR).
- (c) Travel by employees designated as Foreign Service Officers will be in accordance with Volume 6 of the State Departments Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM).

PART 301-2--GENERAL RULES

301-2.1(a) What form do I use to authorize my travel?

Form CD-29, "Travel Order" or other authorized bureau form will be used to authorize travel. See <http://www.osec.doc.gov/forms/> for a copy of the CD-29. All travelers, including non-Government persons (invitational travelers) whose travel expenses are being paid for by the Department, shall be issued written travel orders prior to the beginning of the travel and the incurrence of any expenses.

301-2.1(b) How do I receive authorization to travel in cases of emergency when travel orders cannot be issued prior to travel?

In cases of emergency when a travel order cannot be issued prior to travel, you will obtain a travel order number from the authorizing office, as well as the applicable accounting information. The requesting office shall prepare a "Confirmatory Travel Order" as soon as possible thereafter, annotating the travel order number and justification. However, written or electronic advance authorization is required for use of premium class, reduced fares for group or charter arrangements, payment of reduced per diem rate, acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses, and travel expenses related to attendance at a conference.

301-2.1(c) How do I receive authorization for emergency travel while on a TDY assignment?

As soon as possible, you should attempt to contact your authorizing official to inform him/her of the emergency circumstances and to obtain verbal approval to travel, as well as a new travel order number. The authorizing official will determine if the situation warrants payment for emergency travel expenses, and if travel to an alternate location other than the official station or point of interruption will be authorized. A separate "Confirmatory Travel Order" and travel voucher will be prepared for the emergency travel. The travel order should summarize the emergency situation which caused the interruption in the TDY assignment.

301-2.1(d)

301-2.1(d) When must I have a travel order?

You must have a travel order when one or more of the following applies to your TDY travel:

- 1) Travel exceeds one calendar day (24 hour period);
- 2) Travel exceeds 12 hours and per diem is incurred;
- 3) Common carrier transportation for travel is required;
- 4) You will incur travel expenses at no cost to DOC (zero - \$0) dollar travel authorization), when an outside source or another Federal agency prepays all travel expenses and DOC is charged nothing.

301-2.1(e) What information is required for a travel order?

Travel orders should be prepared far enough in advance of travel to allow sufficient time for the proper approvals, and to be returned to the traveler prior to the beginning of travel. This is especially critical for foreign travel where country cable clearances, passports, and visas may be required.

Travel orders should specifically indicate only the authorized expenses to be incurred, the allowable modes of transportation, leave, and must indicate:

- 1) Bureau code;
- 2) Travel type code;
- 3) Travel purpose code; and
- 4) Accounting classification code(s).

301-2.1(f) How do I prepare travel orders spanning two fiscal years?

One travel order will be prepared showing both fiscal years' accounting codes. The current year should be clearly shown in Block 10 with the following year shown in Block 15. Round-trip transportation tickets will be chargeable to the current appropriation, and charges for per diem, mileage, and other expenses are chargeable to the fiscal year in which the expenses are actually incurred, e.g., per diem expenses are incurred daily.

301-2.1(g) Is there a special statement that must be shown on the travel order for travel beginning or ending in the next fiscal year?

Yes. Unless statutory authorizations allow otherwise, travel orders beginning or ending in the next fiscal year should include the following statement: "Approval of travel scheduled to be accomplished on or after October 1, 200X, is contingent upon availability of FY 200X(+1) funds."

301-2.1(h)

301-2.1(h) Where do I show leave on the travel authorization?

Leave in conjunction with official travel must be shown in Block 14, “Special Provisions/Remarks” of the travel order. Personal points of travel must never be shown in Block 7 “Itinerary” of the travel order. Example: “Leave May 7 to 10 is authorized in conjunction with TDY.”

301-2.1(i) How do I show changes to a travel order that has already been approved, but travel has not taken place?

Complete an amended travel order to show changes to a travel order that has already been approved, but travel has not taken place. Amendments should be issued to add expenses that materially affect the amount of anticipated expenses, to add expenses that require specific approval (e.g., to add a destination, rental car, actual expense), and/or to show when travel is delayed more than 30 days. The amended travel order is assigned the same travel order number with an added alpha designator.

301-2.1(j) What should I do if I incur expenses that are not authorized on the travel order?

After travel, expenses that are not authorized on the travel order must be post-approved in the remarks section of the travel voucher using the following: “Reimbursement of the (specific expense(s)) as stated on the travel voucher were necessary and post-approved.” The authorizing official’s signature is required next to the statement in the remarks section.

301-2.1(k) How do I cancel my travel order?

When an official trip is canceled, the requesting/approving official will mark the travel order “void”, and return it to the appropriate accounting office for cancellation of obligated funds. If the travel order has been submitted to the TMC, the TMC must be notified that the travel order has been cancelled.

301-2.1(l) What is a blanket travel order?

A blanket travel order is issued to pre-authorize multiple trips which cannot be scheduled in advance. Blanket travel orders:

- 1) Can only be issued to DOC employees and are limited to repetitive operational travel.
- 2) Should include a specific purpose that would apply to all trips made under the blanket travel authorization.
- 3) Should be limited as to duration and places to be visited. The duration of a blanket travel authorization (up to the limit of one fiscal year) will depend on the nature of the activity in which the employee, station, or field party is engaged.
- 4) Cannot be used for conferences, meetings, and seminars.

301-2.1(m) Can blanket travel orders be used for foreign travel?

Yes. Blanket travel orders may be used for foreign travel only when:

- 1) daily assignments are of a routine operational nature, such as cross-the-border travel to Canada and Mexico, or
- 2) travel to any foreign area is an emergency, e.g., nuclear disaster clean-up, and spills of oil and hazardous materials.

301-2.1(n) Can actual expenses be authorized on my blanket travel order?

No. Actual expenses can only be authorized on individual travel orders and not on blanket travel orders.

301-2.1(o) Once my blanket travel order is approved, do I need to have any other approval?

Yes. All travel accomplished through blanket travel order must be approved orally by the traveler's supervisor.

301-2.1(p) Who has the authority to approve travel vouchers?

Travel vouchers may be approved by the employee's approving official. However, travel vouchers that include expenses that require specific approval that are not authorized on the travel order can be authorized at the level of authority cited in DOC, Chapter 301-2.4(e).

301-2.4(a)

301-2.4(a) What are my responsibilities as an employee traveling on official business?

It is the traveler's responsibility to know the regulations governing travel and any related requirements, to prepare accurate and factual vouchers for travel reimbursement in a timely fashion, and to report promptly to the timekeeper all leave taken while in a travel status.

301-2.4(b) What are the requesting/approving official's responsibilities for employees traveling on official business?

Requesting/approving officials have the authority to request or approve travel subject to limitations established by each bureau head. The official occupying the position to which the responsibility has been delegated must personally sign Block 15 of the travel order. It is the requesting/approving official's responsibility to:

- 1) Determine whether the travel is required and is in the interest of the Government, and complies with the overall travel plans of the organizational unit.
- 2) Fully inform travelers of their entitlements, as well as their responsibilities while traveling on official business.
- 3) Approve itineraries which will most effectively serve program needs at the least cost.
- 4) Provide for the use of the most economical modes of transportation, which are consistent with services generally meeting acceptable standards and the objective of the mission.
- 5) Provide for an appropriate subsistence rate under unusual circumstances.
- 6) Schedule employees' travel within their regular workweek, to the maximum extent practicable (5 USC 5542 and 5USC 6107 (b) (2)).
- 7) Consider having available field personnel accomplish the proposed mission at reduced expense to the organizational unit (if applicable).
- 8) Ensure the preparation of a CD-334, "Request for Approval of Extra Fare Air Accommodation," when premium-class air accommodations are used (See FTR 301-10.123 for additional guidance)
- 9) Ensure that the travel order is properly prepared and includes, where necessary:

301-2.4(c)

- i) A valid justification when a contract carrier is not used.
- ii) An acknowledgment statement where special discount fares will be used and a cancellation/change fee will apply.
- iii) An attached valid justification for the use of a foreign flag air carrier;
- iv) The dates and location of authorized personal leave points (combining personal leave with official travel should only be allowed when the personal business will not interfere with the performance of official duties).
- v) The location of an authorized rest stop which is in accordance with usually traveled routes, the guidelines of the Fly America Act, and bureau policy.
- vi) Specific approval for non-customary expenses which include, but are not limited to, actual expense, and rental car.

10) If any transportation, accommodations, or other travel expenses are to be paid for or provided in-kind by a non-Federal source, ensure appropriate approvals are received for the travel gift prior to the date of travel.

301-2.4(c) Who holds the delegation of authority to approve most types of travel within each bureau?

The Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration (CFO/ASA) delegates the authority to approve most types of travel to Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary.

301-2.4(d) Can Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary, re-delegate the authority to approve most types of travel within their respective bureaus?

Yes. Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can re-delegate most types of travel within their respective bureaus. Each bureau is responsible for designating, by organizational title, the officials who may authorize official travel. The designations must be in written form and at a sufficiently high level to ensure proper review and control.

301-2.4(e)

301-2.4(e) What types of travel can Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary approve and/or re-delegate?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or re-delegate the following types of travel:

- a) Use of **premium class accommodations**,
- b) Use of a **foreign air carrier**,
- c) Use of **reduced fares for group or charter arrangements**,
- d) Use of **cash to pay for common carrier**,
- e) Use of **extra-fare train service**,
- f) Travel by **ship**,
- g) Use of a **rental car**,
- h) Use of a **Government aircraft**,
- i) Payment of a **reduced per diem rate**,
- j) Payment of **actual expense**,
- k) Travel expenses related to **emergency travel**,
- l) Transportation expenses related to **threatened / law enforcement/investigative employees** and members of their families,
- m) Travel expenses related to travel to a **foreign area**,
- n) Acceptance of **payment from an outside source** for travel expenses,
- o) Travel expenses related to **attendance at a conference**,
- p) Travel expenses related to **relocation travel**,
- q) Travel expenses for **invitational travelers**,
- r) Travel expenses for an **immediate family member to attend award ceremonies**,
- s) Travel expenses for **group travel**,
- t) Travel **expenses within the vicinity of one's official duty station or residence**,
- u) Lodging expenses related to a **conference**,
- v) Authorization of a **rest stop**,
- w) Return to **ODS on non-work days** during TDY assignments, and
- x) Periodic return to **ODS on a case-by-case basis** during extended TDY assignments.

301-2.4(f)

301-2.4(f) Are there any types of travel that Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary cannot approve and/or re-delegate?

Yes. Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating units reporting directly to the Secretary cannot approve the following:

- a) Exemptions from the **mandatory use of the Citibank Government travel card**,
- b) Citibank Government **travel card reinstatements**,
- c) Waivers for **\$500,000 house value cap**,
- d) Acceptance of an in-kind **donation for travel which exceeds by \$250** the value of an expenditure (i.e., for accommodations or transportation) available under the FTR. ("Exceeds by \$250" is defined as an in-kind donation which exceeds maximum allowances for official travel by \$250.),
- e) Request to have **per diem rates surveyed**, and
- f) Acceptance of payment from a **non-Federal source for travel expenses over \$25,000**.

301-2.4(g) How are these types of travel approved?

- a) Exemptions from the mandatory use of the Citibank Government travel card,
- b) Citibank Government travel card reinstatements,
- c) Waivers for \$500,000 house value cap,
- d) Acceptance of an in-kind donation for travel which exceeds by \$250 the value of an expenditure available under the FTR,
- e) Request to have per diem rates surveyed

Memoranda of request must be signed by the bureau Chief Financial Officer, and submitted to the CFO/ASA for approval.

301-2.4(h)

301-2.4(h) How is acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses over \$25,000 approved?

Memoranda of request for acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses over \$25,000 must be signed by the bureau Chief Financial Officer, and submitted to the Secretary of Commerce for approval.

301-2.4(I) Who authorizes travel for the CFO/ASA, Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating units reporting directly to the Secretary?

The Chief of Staff or the Executive Secretary, Office of the Secretary, will approve all travel (including both foreign and domestic) for the CFO/ASA, Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary.

301-2.4(j) How much lead time does the Chief of Staff or Executive Secretary, Office of the Secretary, require to approve travel orders?

The Chief of Staff or the Executive Secretary, Office of the Secretary, requires at least a one week lead time prior to the beginning of travel. If travel orders cannot be forwarded within the one week lead time, a memoranda or request detailing the travel, including dates, purpose, cost, and number of DOC staff participants can be forwarded for preapproval.

301-2.4(k) Who approves requests for premium-class accommodations for Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary, and Office of the Secretary employees?

The CFO/ASA approves requests for premium-class accommodations for Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary and Office of the Secretary employees unless international travel is being funded by ITA. In those cases, the Deputy Under Secretary of ITA will approve the requests.

301-2.4(l)

301-2.4(l) Who authorizes my travel when the requesting/approving official is not physically available to sign my travel order?

Only officials acting on behalf of the requesting/approving official can sign for the requesting/approving official when the requesting/approving official is not physically available to sign travel orders. Requesting/approving officials will be responsible for travel orders authorized for them in their absence.

Only individuals in suitable management positions should be permitted to sign for the requesting/approving official during their absence. The term “suitable management positions” excludes non-management levels such as administrative assistants or other clerical staff.

References below correspond to CTR, Chapter 301-2.4(e). All types of travel mentioned in CTR, Chapter 301-2.4(e) will be authorized on the travel order. The following types of travel require additional approvals and/or forms:

301-2.5(a) How are premium-class accommodations authorized?

Form CD-334, “Request for Approval of Extra Fare Air Accommodations”, is used to authorize premium-class accommodations. A copy of the Form CD-334 and a copy of the travel authorization must be submitted to a central location within each bureau for reporting purposes whenever first-class travel is authorized. A CD-334 is not required when the upgrade is paid for from either personal funds or through the use of frequent flyer benefits. (See FTR 301-10.123 for additional information).

Note: Employees who have medical certificates on file must be re-certified every two years.

See <http://www.osec.doc.gov/oas/travel/default.htm> for a copy of a CD-334.

301-2.5(b) How is use of foreign air carriers authorized?

“Fly America Act Justification Statement”, is used to authorize foreign air carriers and must be attached the travel order when procuring transportation tickets. Under normal circumstances, the “Fly America Act Justification Statement” will be signed by an authorizing official and under emergency circumstances can be signed by the employee. A “Fly America Act Justification Statement” is not required when traveling between two foreign points and only foreign carriers are available, or when transportation is financed directly by or reimbursed from private sources or a foreign Government.

See page 300-1-14 for a copy of a “Fly America Act Justification Statement”.

301-2.5(c))

301-2.5(c) How are reduced fares for group or charter arrangements authorized?

Memoranda of request for reduced fares for group and charter arrangements must be submitted to the appropriate delegation within your bureau. The memorandum must include all the pertinent facts as to why specific use is necessary and how the group travel fare is advantageous to the Government.

Advance written or digital authorization is required. When chartered services are obtained, the terms of the charter shall be in writing and signed by an appropriate delegation within your bureau. Advance written or digital authorization is required. Failure to comply to any of the above mentioned requirements may result in denial of reimbursement.

Approval is not required to charter helicopters or other small aircraft for short flights to move personnel or equipment during the course of normal field activities.

301-2.5(d) How is the use of cash to pay for common carrier transportation exceeding \$100 authorized?

Memoranda of request for the use of cash to pay for common carrier transportation exceeding \$100 must be submitted to the appropriate delegation within your bureau. The memoranda of request must come from the requesting/approving official, must fully explain why cash was used, and must be accompanied by:

- A copy of the travel authorization;
- A copy of the passenger's ticket receipt (must show a form of payment); and
- Original travel voucher or reclaim travel voucher.

By signing the travel voucher, the traveler assigns to the United States Government any rights he/she may have in connection with any reimbursable transportation charges.

301-2.5(k)(I) What is considered to be "family" with respect to emergency travel?

"Family" includes any member of your immediate family (see FTR 300-3.1 for the definition of immediate family). However, your approving official may, on a case-by-case basis, expand the definition to include other members of your and/or spouse's extended family.

301-2.5(k)(ii)

301-2.5(k)(ii) What factors will my approving official consider in expanding the definition of “family” for emergency travel purposes?

Your approving official will consider on a case-by-case basis:

- (I) The extent of the emergency;
- (ii) Your relationship to the individual involved in the emergency; and
- (iii) The degree of your responsibility for the individual involved in the emergency.

301-2.5(n) How is the acceptance of payment from an outside source for travel expenses authorized?

The Form , “Record of Gift or Bequest” (or Form CD-342, Record of Gifts and Decorations from Foreign Government” if the donation is from a foreign government) authorizes acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses for travel taking place entirely outside the United States. Form SF 326, Semiannual Report of Payments Accepted from a Non-Federal Source must accompany the CD-210 whenever the payment exceeds \$250.

301-2.5(p) What level is sufficient to authorize relocation travel?

Relocation travel should be approved at a level no lower than the individual exercising budgetary control over the unit. This individual should be fully aware of the total costs likely to be incurred in the relocation.

301-2.5(r)(I) What expenses will be paid for an award recipient and one individual of the award recipient’s choosing to attend an award ceremony?

Travel and per diem directly to and from the site of the ceremony will be paid to a Departmental award recipient and one individual of the award recipient’s choosing to attend a major award ceremony (e.g., Presidential award ceremony, the Department’s annual award ceremony, or a prestigious honorary award ceremony sponsored by a non-Federal organization). The additional individual can be a family member or another person whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

301-2.5(r)(ii) Can more than one individual accompany an award recipient to attend an award ceremony?

At bureau discretion, travel reimbursement for more than one individual may be considered in instances in which the award winner requires assistance because of a handicapped condition. Medical documentation must be submitted.

301-2.5(r)(iii)

301-2.5(r)(iii) How does the individual accompanying the award recipient receive travel reimbursement?

One travel order will be issued that covers both the employee and the additional person. After travel, the employee is responsible for submitting one travel voucher to obtain reimbursement for travel costs for both the award recipient and the additional individual accompanying the award recipient.

301-2.5(s) How is group travel authorized?

1) Domestic group travel: Memoranda of request for groups of twenty (20) or more employees, from the same bureau, including invitational travelers, traveling to the same location or event, must be submitted to and approved by the appropriate delegation within your bureau.

2) Foreign and non-foreign group travel: Memoranda of request for groups of ten (10) or more employees, from the same bureau, including invitational travelers, traveling to the same location or event, must be submitted to and approved by the appropriate delegation within your bureau.

301-2.5(s)(1) What standards should be followed when authorizing group travel?

Bureaus/operating units shall maintain sufficient documentation, signed by an appropriate delegation, to demonstrate that they have complied with the following minimum standards when selecting locations or attendees:

- 1) Ensure that only travel that is essential to the purpose of the Department and for accomplishment of the bureau's mission is approved;
- 2) Ensure that bureau/operating unit attendance is limited to the minimum necessary to accomplish the mission.
- 3) Consider all expenses in selecting attendees and conference or meeting locations. Such expenses include travel to and from the site, ground transportation, lodging, meals and incidental costs, registration fees, meeting room rentals, and other related costs, including employees' time away from the official duty station.
- 4) Explore alternatives to holding conferences or meetings away from the official duty station such as conference calls or having available field personnel accomplish the proposed mission.

301-2.5(x)

301-2.5(x) How often am I authorized to return to my official duty station while on an extended temporary duty assignment?

Generally, you may be authorized to return to your official station at intervals of not less than two weeks, provided that the TDY assignment will continue for at least one more week. Your bureau officials are responsible for preparing the appropriate cost analysis to justify such returns based on factors that may be unique to the bureau.

301-2.6(a) What is an honorarium?

A payment given to someone as a consultant for services for which fees are not legally required.

301-2.6(b) Can I accept an honorarium while on official travel?

No. Acceptance of an honorarium in connection with your official duty or position is **prohibited** whether accepted personally or on behalf of your employing bureau. However, employees who lecture while on annual leave (not on official travel orders) may accept reimbursement of expenses from non-Federal sources. Consult the Federal Ethics Regulation.

Subchapter B-Allowable Travel Expenses

PART 301-10-TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES

**Subpart B-Common Carrier Transportation
Use of Contract City-Pair Fares**

301-10.107(b)(I) What does the Department of Commerce (DOC) consider “normal working hours” for purposes of determining if a non-contract carrier is justified?

DOC considers normal working hours as Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. (local time).

301-10.107(f) Is anyone in the DOC exempt from using contract carriers?

Yes. Foreign Service officers are exempt from required use but are encouraged to use contract city-pairs.

301-10.107(g) How do I show authorization for the use of non-contract carriers on a travel order?

When authorized under one of the justifications in the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), Chapter 301-10.107, **authorization and justification** for the use of a non-contract carrier will be shown on the travel order.

301-10.107(h) How do I show authorization for the use of non-contract carriers if I have a blanket travel order?

When authorized under one of the justifications in the FTR, Chapter 301-10.107, **authorization and justification** for the use of a non-contract carriers will be submitted in a written memorandum prior to the actual travel. If emergency circumstances prevent advance authorization, the authorization and justification for the use of a non-contract carrier will be stated on, or attached to, the travel voucher.

301-10.107(I)

301-10.107(I) When there are multiple airports at my duty station, can I use the airport of my choice based on convenience?

You may use the airport of your choice based on convenience in cities where separate contracts have been awarded to each of the different airports. However, in cities where contracts have not been awarded to every airport, you will be required to use the airport(s) where the contract was awarded. If you use an airport where a contract has not been awarded, you are required to justify the use of a non-contract carrier based on one of the justifications in FTR, Chapter 301-10.107, and not on the basis of convenience of one airport over another.

301-10.108(a) Does DOC encourage the use of non-refundable fares?

No. DOC does not encourage the use of non-refundable fares since most non-refundable fares must be used for the specifically ticketed flight, and will have no value once the flight has departed. Additionally, non-refundable fares carry penalty fees imposed by the airlines when the trip is cancelled, interrupted, or changed.

301-10.108(b) Do I need to show anything special on the travel order when a non-refundable fare is used?

Yes. The following statement must be included on the travel order when a non-refundable fare is used:

“I acknowledge that the use of this non-refundable fare must be used for the specifically ticketed flight, and will have no value once the flight has departed. Additionally, non-refundable fares carry penalty fees imposed by the airlines when the trip is changed.” If the travel order is signed prior to the statement being added, the statement will be added to the travel order and initialed by the requesting/approving official.

301-10.108(c)

301-10.108(c) Who is responsible for loss of funds associated with a non-refundable fare?

For personal reasons: If the non-refundable ticket is not used for the specifically ticketed flight, which results in the loss of the ticket, the traveler is responsible for repaying the value of the ticket to their servicing finance office. If travel is changed, which results in a penalty fee, the traveler is responsible for the penalty fee.

For official reasons: If the non-refundable ticket is not used for the specifically ticketed flight, which results in the loss of the ticket, the Government is responsible for the loss of the ticket. If travel is changed, which results in a penalty fee, the Government is responsible for the penalty fee.

301-10.110(a) Can I take advantage of contract fares for personal travel that is combined with official travel?

No. Contract fares can only be used for official travel and because of this the Travel Management Center will book only your official ticket. You will need to take the ticket to the airlines and have them reissue it to include your personal travel. The difference the airline charges between the contract fare and the non-refundable fare is your responsibility, and must be charged to personal funds.

301-10.110(b) What should I do if I purchase a ticket for personal travel, and then find out I'm expected to perform official travel during my personal travel, but at a different location?

A ticket for the official travel must be purchased from the personal travel location to the temporary duty point. However, the traveler will not be eligible for use of Government fares from the leave location since they are not at your duty station or another temporary duty point. The traveler will be reimbursed not to exceed what the contract fare would have been from the official duty station to the temporary duty point. The traveler will be responsible for any additional costs above the Government contract fare.

301-10.110(c) Are there ever any circumstances when I may have to utilize the Government contract fare when a personal travel location is involved?

Yes. If notice is received during the personal trip, that official travel must be performed, then the Government contract fare can be utilized from the personal travel location, to an official travel location(s), and return to the personal travel location.

301-10.114(a)

301-10.114(a) Where do I return unused or lost tickets?

The servicing TMC must be notified when tickets are unused or lost. Any unused hard copy tickets must be returned to the TMC. In addition, report any unused or partially used electronic tickets to their servicing TMC immediately. Upon receipt of the unused or lost ticket, the TMC will send an e-mail (refund credit receipt) indicating the ticket number, the fare refunded, and the date the refund was processed.

NOTE: Do not submit a travel claim for completely or partially unused tickets purchased on the individual Government travel card since credit will be issued directly to the applicable travel card account.

301-10.114(b) What happens if I do not receive a credit for unused or lost tickets right away on my individual travel card account?

If the ticket charge appears on the charge card statement, but the credit does not, immediate credit can be obtained in the following way:

- a) subtract the amount of the credit from the payment; and
- b) send a copy of the refund credit receipt with the payment to the bank; and
- c) send a copy of the “Lost Ticket Application” if the ticket was lost.

The bank will monitor the account and take whatever steps necessary to obtain the credit. The cardholder will be advised of the final resolution.

301-10.114(c) What is the ticket refund process?

The TMC forwards the unused paper tickets weekly, along with applicable paperwork required by the Airline Reporting Corporation (ARC), to a clearing house for processing to the bank and airline. When electronic tickets are issued, the TMC will print the unused ticket, and follow the same procedures as a paper ticket. The credit amount of the ticket should be reflected on the next billing statement the traveler or finance office (depending on if the ticket was charged to a centrally-billed account or the employee’s individual Government travel card) receives from the bank. The refund may take six to eight weeks depending on the billing cycle.

301-10.114(d)

301-10.114(d) What is my liability for lost tickets?

Generally, you will be responsible for the cost of lost tickets or the fee for filing for refund of a lost ticket. Travelers are encouraged to contact the carrier they obtained the ticket from and request a replacement ticket. Most carriers will comply if boarding passes have not already been issued against the lost ticket and if you can produce proper identification and a copy of your travel orders. NOTE: paper tickets have monetary value and should be guarded carefully.

301-10.114(e) What do I do if the carrier will not issue a replacement ticket for my lost ticket?

If the carrier will not issue a replacement ticket for the lost ticket, a new ticket must be purchased using your individual Government travel card. A “Lost Ticket Application” will need to be filed immediately with your servicing TMC.

301-10.116(a) Where do I return compensation from an airline for denied boarding?

Return any compensation received from an airline for denied boarding to the servicing finance office so that credit can be applied to the correct accounting classification code.

Use of United States Flag Air Carriers

301-10.143(a) How does DOC define improper use of a foreign air carrier?

Improper use is defined as either not having an approved “Fly America Act Justification Statement” or the inability to justify the use of a foreign air carrier.

301-10.143(b) What is DOC’s policy regarding improper use of a foreign air carrier?

It is both GSA and DOC’s policy that transportation costs for the improper use of a foreign air carrier be the responsibility of the employee. When the individual Government travel card is used to improperly charge foreign air fare, the employee will not be reimbursed for any transportation costs paid to the foreign carrier. When the centrally-billed account is used to improperly charge foreign air fare, a bill for collection for the total amount paid to the foreign carrier will be issued to the employee. The fact that the traveler is unaware of the requirements of the Fly America Act does not relieve him/her of liability under the FTR and CTR. There is no basis for waiver from this provision.

Subpart D—Privately-Owned Vehicle (POV)

301-10.309(a) How do I compare the cost of POV versus common carrier transportation?

COMMON CARRIER

Air fare
Round trip taxi fare & tip
(**Do not** use POV costs)
Shuttle/taxi to hotel
Per diem
Excess baggage

POV

Mileage
Tolls, bridge, ferry, road, tunnel
Parking (hotel)
Per diem (including stops)

Do not include the cost of local transportation at the TDY site.
Comparison is part of your travel record.

Subpart E—Special Conveyances

301-10.400(a) Can a special conveyance be used for both official and personal travel?

Yes. A special conveyance can be used for both official and personal travel when charges can be prorated accordingly. Only official charges can be claimed on a travel voucher.

301-10.451(a)(4) May I be reimbursed for the cost of Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) or Theft Insurance when renting an automobile while on official travel? What are the insurance limits when I rent a car under agreement with the Government?

No. The rental vehicle has full coverage under the Government's car rental agreement, when TDY is CONUS. If traveling outside of CONUS, then the traveler may be reimbursed if required by the rental agency. Under a Government contract, full coverage is included in rental cost, in addition to full comprehensive and collision coverage, rental car companies provide each traveler with liability coverage in the amount of \$100,000 per person, \$300,000 per accident, and \$25,000 property damage for each occurrence. If a car is rented at a non-government lower rate, this coverage will not be included. If insurance coverage is bought from the car rental company, the cost of the insurance will not be reimbursed by the government.

301-10.454 Under what conditions am I liable for loss or damage to a rental vehicle under agreement with the Government?

The traveler is liable when such loss or damage to a rental vehicle is caused by willful and wanton negligence. See U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement managed by the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) which can be found at <http://www.sddc.army.mil/>.

301-10.455 Is there any criteria I should consider when renting a vehicle on official business?

Yes. The following criteria should be considered when renting a vehicle on official business:

- a) Traveler should use a car rental company participating under agreement with the Government which will result in the greatest savings to the Government and includes full insurance coverage. In selecting a particular firm, give consideration to additional transportation costs involved in obtaining and returning the car and to lost productive time.
- b) Decline lower rental car rates from companies that do not have an agreement with the Government. Rental car rates offered at a lower than Government rate do not include full coverage insurance for damages resulting from an accident while performing official travel.
- c) Use the smallest size vehicle available which will adequately carry out the purpose of the mission. When choosing the car size, the number of travelers riding in the vehicle, space available for luggage, and energy conservation (fuel economy) should be considered.
- d) Travelers should refuel the vehicle before returning to the car rental location to avoid additional refueling charges and premium prices.

301-10.456 Am I required to pay the Government Administrative Rate Supplement (GARS) when I rent a vehicle for official business?

Yes. When renting a vehicle for official business, the \$5.00 GARS per day is required. GARS is intended to reimburse the car rental companies for costs incurred which are peculiar to doing business with the Government. GARS will be included with the rental car rate when claimed on a travel voucher. A copy of the rental car agreement must always be attached to the travel voucher.

Part 301-11 PER DIEM EXPENSES

Subpart A—General Rules

301-11.1(a)(1) When am I entitled to per diem?

The traveler is entitled to per diem when the following three conditions are met:

- 1) travel is performed more than 50 miles from the vicinity of the traveler's official duty station (corporate limits of the city or town in which the traveler is stationed), and
- 2) travel is performed more than 50 miles from place of residence (location from which the traveler commutes daily to their official duty station), and
- 3) travel status is for more than 12 hours. *See FTR, Chapter 301-11*

301-11.1(d)(I) Can I claim per diem when I perform official travel or attend conferences in the vicinity of my official duty station or residence?

No. Per diem **will not be authorized or paid** to employees who perform official travel or attend conferences in the vicinity of their official duty station or residence.

301-11.1(d)(ii) Are there any situations where I could receive per diem within the vicinity of my official duty station or residence?

Yes. Under unusual circumstances, the official who authorizes the travel authorization may authorize per diem on a case-by-case basis, based upon commuting time or distance, the location of the employee's residence and official duty station, or the nature of the temporary duty as it relates to the programmatic mission of the operating unit. However, the travel time must be 12 hours or more.

301-11.1(d)(iii) When per diem is authorized within the vicinity of my official duty station or residence, do I need to provide a justification?

Yes. When per diem is authorized within the vicinity of your official duty station or residence, the traveler is required to provide a justification on the travel order.

301-11.3(a)

301-11.3(a) Can I be paid meals and/or refreshments at my duty station while attending an official training session under the Government Employees Training Act?

Yes. Section 4109(a)(2) of title 5 USC provides that an agency may pay or reimburse a traveler for all or a part of the necessary expenses of training, including the necessary costs of travel including meals.

301-11.8(a) How is lodging authorized when it is obtained in a different location other than my TDY location?

When lodging is obtained at a different location than the TDY location, the circumstances that cause lodging to be obtained at the different location, as well as the lodging location, and applicable per diem rate for that area, will either be authorized on the travel order when known in advance, or post approved on the travel voucher when known after the travel order is authorized.

301-11.10(a) What do I need to do when my receipts show a foreign currency?

Charges made in foreign currency will be converted into U.S. dollars. The conversion rate used will be at least as favorable as an interbank rate, where required by law, an official rate. This rate shall be the one in existence at the time the transaction is processed. Amounts converted by common carriers such as airlines will be billed at rate the carriers use.

You can also convert foreign currency at the following internet site:
<http://www.xe.com/ucc/>.

301-11.12(a) Do I need to show anything on the travel order when lodging is reimbursed through a purchase order?

Yes. The daily lodging amount reimbursed through a purchase order will be stated on the travel order and will not exceed the maximum rate authorized.

301-11.16(a)

301-11.16(a) Must travelers notify their servicing TMC when changing or cancelling hotel and/or car rental reservations?

Yes. Travelers must notify their servicing TMC when changing or canceling hotel and/or car rental reservations. Hotel reservations are guaranteed to the traveler's Government issued charge card at the time of booking. If the hotel reservation is not canceled in the time frame specified by the hotel, the hotel may charge a no-show fee to the traveler's Government issued charge card. Some hotels are charging early check-out fees.

301-11.18(a) Can I be reimbursed for snacks while on official travel?

No. There is no authority for reimbursement for snacks, such as candy, Sodas, coffee, sweet rolls, donuts, etc., which are not consumed as part of a regular meal.

301-11.20(a) How is a rest stop authorized?

A rest stop must be specifically authorized by the approving official on the travel order, as well as the location of the rest stop. Selection of the rest stop location will be in accordance with usually traveled routes and must comply with the Fly America Act. Such authorization cannot allow more than 24 hours, and must be in compliance with FTR 301-11.20.

301-11.21(c) Am I entitled to per diem if I choose to travel to an alternate location other than my official duty station (ODS) on non-workdays during a TDY assignment?

Yes. You are entitled to per diem, not to exceed what it would have cost to remain at the TDY location when traveling to an alternate location other than the ODS on non-workdays during a TDY assignment. You are not entitled to transportation costs to an alternate location in lieu of per diem.

301-11.21(d)

301-11.21(d) Am I entitled to per diem while in a leave status during a TDY assignment?

If leave status is for one-half or less of the prescribed daily working hours during a TDY assignment, you are entitled to a full day of per diem. If leave status is for more than one half of the prescribed daily working hours (except as provided in FTR 301-30, Emergency Travel, which covers illness and injury), then you are not entitled to per diem.

301-11.21(e) Am I entitled to per diem if I take leave before and after non-workdays during a TDY assignment?

No. Per diem will not be paid if you are on leave status at the end of the workday before the non-workdays and at the beginning of the workday following the non-workdays, and the period of leave on either of those days is more than one-half of the prescribed working hours for that day (except as provided in FTR 301-30.4 regarding illness and injury).

301-11.21(f) Under what circumstances will I be reimbursed travel expenses when assigned to perform TDY while on leave away from my ODS?

You will be reimbursed for travel expenses when assigned to perform TDY during or after leave away from the ODS under the following circumstances:

a) You are assigned to perform temporary duty (TDY) prior to the expiration of annual leave, then you will be reimbursed travel expenses from the place of leave to the TDY point and return to the place of leave, not to exceed what it would have cost from ODS to TDY point and return to ODS; this includes per diem for the time spent at the TDY location.

b) You are assigned to perform TDY at the expiration of annual leave, then you will be reimbursed travel expenses from the place of leave to the TDY point, not to exceed what it would be from ODS to TDY point and return to the ODS. Per diem will be paid only while on TDY and will not be paid for any period of leave.

c) You are assigned to return to the ODS prior to the expiration of annual leave because of unforeseen circumstances, and returns to the point of leave upon completion of duties, you will be reimbursed travel expenses for the time required en route, but not for the time spent at the ODS.

Note: Travel expenses for time en route will only be paid if the traveler returns to the original point of leave.

Subpart C—Reduced Per Diem

301-11.200(c)) What am I entitled to when assigned a detail?

Approving officials will consider establishing a lower per diem rate when the traveler is assigned a detail. Apartments and extended stay lodging establishments should be considered when establishing a reduced per diem when assigned to a detail. Based on the circumstances of the travel assignment, approving officials may authorize a reduced per diem rate from the first day of the assignment, or the rate may be reduced after a specified period of days, e.g., 15 days, 30 days. When a reduced per diem rate is established, the rate must be authorized on the travel order.

Subpart D—Actual Expense

301-11.302(a) How is actual expense authorized?

Actual expense is authorized prior to travel by the approving official and the daily maximum rate is stated on the travel order. Actual expense may be post approved on the travel voucher when authorized after completing the travel order.

301-11.307 How do I calculate actual expenses for *lodging only*?

When calculating actual expenses for lodging only, multiply the applicable actual expense rate of 300% (a lower rate may be established by your bureau, e.g., 150%, 200%) times the whole per diem rate (includes lodging and M&IE). Subtract the applicable M&IE rate from the total to get the maximum amount that can be claimed for lodging under actual expense. The lodging amount must be shown in the Actual Subsistence Block on the travel voucher and the flat M&IE rate is shown in the Per Diem Block. Receipts are only required for lodging costs.

301-11.308 **Can I see an example of how to calculate actual expense for *lodging only*?**

Yes. The following is an example of actual expenses at 150% for lodging only (M&IE is not increased):

Per Diem		Actual Expenses (for lodging only)
Lodging:	\$115	$150\% \times \$153 = \229.50
M&IE	\$ 38	(rounded to \$230)
Maximum Per Diem	\$153	$\$230 - \$38 = \mathbf{\$192}$

301-11.309 **How do I calculate actual expenses for *lodging and M&IE*?**

When calculating actual expense for lodging and M&IE, multiply the applicable actual expense rate (150% - 300%) times the whole per diem rate. The cost of each meal must be reasonable and must be itemized in the Actual Subsistence Block on the travel voucher. Receipts must be included for lodging and any one meal that exceeds \$75.

301-11.310 **Can I see an example of how to calculate actual expense for *lodging and M&IE*?**

Yes. The following is an example of actual expenses at 300% for lodging and M&IE:

Per Diem		Actual Expenses (for lodging and M&IE)
Lodging:	\$115	$300\% \times \$153 = \mathbf{\$459}$
M&IE	\$ 38	
Maximum Per Diem	\$153	

301-11.311 **Can dry cleaning and laundry be claimed on foreign and non-foreign travel?**

Dry cleaning and laundry expenses remain part of the incidental portion of the per diem rate for travel to foreign and non-foreign areas, and may not be claimed as a separate expense. However, when authorized actual expenses, reasonable claims for dry cleaning and laundry can be approved on foreign and non-foreign trips that exceed five days. Dry cleaning and laundry expenses should only be approved to the extent necessary to complete the assignment. Generally, employees will not be reimbursed

for dry cleaning and laundry immediately prior to the return to his/her ODS. Claims for dry cleaning and laundry on trips of five days or less will not be allowed unless justification by reason of unusual or uncontrollable circumstances.

Subpart F--Local Travel

301-11.700 What is local travel?

Travel within a 50-mile radius of either the official duty station or residence.

301-11.701 What is the “actual work site”?

The place at which the major portion of the employee’s duties are performed and where the greater part of his/her time is spent.

301-11.702 What am I entitled to when I perform official local travel during a regular and non-regular work day?

General rule: Employees must reach their actual work site and return to their residence at their own expense. If you perform official local travel during your regular work day to an alternate work site, only the travel costs exceeding your normal daily commuting costs will be reimbursed on a mileage basis. Employees who normally commute to their ODS by car pool must determine their weekly commuting expenses and divide by five to determine their daily expense. However, if you perform official local travel on a non-work day to an alternate work site, total travel costs will be reimbursed to you on a mileage basis without a deduction.

301-11.703 What am I entitled to when I perform official local travel away from my actual work site during a regular and non-regular work day?

You are entitled to the travel costs exceeding your normal daily commute when requested to perform official local travel from your actual work site during a regular and non-regular work day.

301-11.704 Am I required to deduct normal daily commuting expenses if I travel to my ODS in a van pool, commuter bus, or other form of transportation where I must pay regardless if I ride or not?

No. Employees who travel to their ODS by van pool, commuter bus, or other form of transportation where they must pay regardless if they ride or not, are not required to make a deduction for their normal daily commuting expenses since they have already paid for these expenses up-front.

301-11.705 Am I entitled to any travel reimbursement for travel between my residence and actual work site for overtime on regular and non-regular work days?

Generally, no. Mileage reimbursement will not be authorized for travel between your residence and actual work site for overtime on regular and non-regular work days. However, in cases where you receive notification of unscheduled emergency overtime after reporting to duty, in limited circumstances, taxi fares may be reimbursed. When emergency overtime is required, taxi fares may be authorized only when the use of public transportation would subject you to substantial personal hazard or safety, and only when you can provide no other means of transportation.

301-11.706 If I am detailed to perform official local travel to another office, what am I entitled to receive?

Employees detailed to perform official local travel on a regular work day to an alternate work site will only be reimbursed the travel costs exceeding their normal daily commuting costs on a mileage basis. However, employees detailed to perform official local travel on a non-work day to an alternate work site will be reimbursed total travel costs on a mileage basis without a deduction.

PART 301-12–MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

301-12.1(a)(i) Can I use my Government travel card to pay for conference registration fees for TDY travel?

No. The Government purchase card will be used to pay for all conference registration fees for TDY travel. However, under unusual circumstances, i.e., when the use of cash is required to procure the registration fee, or when the registration fee is not paid in advance of travel for an unforeseen reason, or for any other reason beyond the employee's control, the Government travel card can be used. When the Government travel card is used to pay a registration fee, the fee must be authorized on the travel order with a proper justification explaining why the use of the Government travel card was used, and claimed as a miscellaneous expense on the travel voucher.

301-12.1(a)(ii) Can I use my Government travel card to pay for conference registration fees for local travel?

No. The Government travel card cannot be used for local travel. The Government purchase card will be used to pay for all conference registration fees for local travel. However, when registration fees cannot be charged to the purchase card, under the unusual circumstances in DOC, Chapter 301-12.1(a)(I) above, registration fees may be claimed on an SF-1164.

301-12.1(b)(i) Am I authorized to make personal phone calls home while on official travel?

Yes, you are authorized to make personal phone calls home while on official travel.

301-12.1(b)(ii) How do I make personal phone calls home while on official travel?

Employees traveling on official business will use one of the following methods to place phone calls home (in order of preference):

- 1) Government-issued telephone calling card furnished by your servicing Telecommunications Office (to be used by frequent travelers, i.e., employees who travel more than twice a year);
- 2) Prepaid calling card furnished by your servicing Telecommunications Office;
- 3) Personal telephone calling card; or
- 4) Direct calling, e.g., through hotel operators.

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301-12.1(b)(iii) How do I get reimbursed for phone calls made using the personal calling card or direct calling method?

You will claim phone calls under miscellaneous expense on the travel voucher when using the personal calling card or direct calling method.

301-12.1(b)(iv) Are there any restrictions/limitations on phone calls made while on official travel?

In general, there are no restrictions on phone calls made while on official travel. Employees are required to limit personal phone calls to a reasonable duration and frequency. Approving officials have the authority to disallow claims that appear to be excessive. Phone calls home may be allowed regardless of the duration of the trip or dollar amount. However, some bureaus may have established limits. Check with your approving official before you travel.

301-12.2(a)(I) Can I use my Government travel card to pay for personal baggage exceeding carrier limits (excess baggage)?

Yes. When authorized an extended TDY assignment, the Government travel card may be used to pay for personal baggage exceeding carrier limits (excess baggage). Excess baggage must be authorized on the travel order with a proper justification explaining why excess baggage was needed, and claimed as a miscellaneous expense on the travel voucher.

301-12.2(f) Can I be reimbursed for lost or damaged baggage when I have not been adequately compensated by the carrier?

Yes. You may file a claim under 31 U.S.C. 3721, The Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act of 1964, Public Law 88-558, using the Form CD-224, Employee Claim for Loss of or Damage to Personal Property when you have not been adequately compensated by the carrier for lost or damaged baggage. The CD-224, a copy of the travel order, correspondence with the carrier, and the amount paid by the carrier will be submitted to the appropriate servicing personal property claims office for payment.

See CTR, Chapter 300-4®) for a copy of the CD-224. See DAO 203-17 for additional information on personal property claims.

Subchapter C **Arranging for Travel Services, Paying Travel Expenses, and Claiming Reimbursement**

301-50 Arranging for Travel Services

301-50.1(a) Does DOC provide travel management services under a Government contract?

Yes. DOC currently has a Government contract with SatoTravel (SATO) for travel management services. Therefore, you are required to use SATO for all common carrier transportation, lodging, and rental cars reservations.

301-50.1(b) Why are travelers required to use a TMC to make reservations for common carrier transportation, lodging, and car rental?

To implement the provisions of the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act, it is *mandatory* that travelers use SATO to make all of their reservations.

301-50.1(c) Are there exceptions to the mandatory use of a TMC when making reservations for common carrier transportation, lodging, and car rental?

Yes. The following are examples of exceptions to the mandatory use of a TMC when making reservations for common carrier transportation, lodging, and car rental:

- 1) Lodging for conferences;
- 2) Lodging where travelers cannot plan where they will lodge from one night to the next;
- 3) Rental car reservations where travelers cannot plan when they will rent a car from one night to the next; and
- 4) The TMC is unable to issue tickets for a common carrier for travel in a foreign country.

301-50.1(d) What documentation does SATO require when issuing tickets?

SATO requires a faxed travel order and/or trip authorization as soon as it is approved, but no later than two to three business days prior to travel to ensure that airline tickets are issued. SATO will not issue tickets without approved travel orders and/or trip authorizations.

301-50.1(h)

301-50.1(e) Are there any fees charged for the issuance of airline tickets?

Yes. SATO will charge a transaction fee for all domestic and foreign tickets (paper or electronic) issued. There are no charges when reservations are made or changed prior to ticketing. However, charges are incurred for changes after the ticket is issued. Therefore, travelers should ensure that travel plans are firm before requesting that tickets be issued. In addition, airlines will charge a fee when a paper ticket is issued, and some airlines will charge security fees and certain taxes.

301-50.1(f) Are there any fees charged when only hotel and/or car rental reservation are made?

Generally, no. However, some TMCs may charge a transaction fee when **only** hotel and/or car rental reservations are made.

301-50.1(g) What type of ticket should I obtain for my official travel?

You are encouraged to use e-tickets whenever possible since most airlines are charging fees to issue paper tickets. However, if your trip is not e-ticketable, you will not be charged a paper ticket fee. In domestic markets, e-tickets are adequate in most circumstances. For certain international travel, paper tickets can be useful. SATO can assist you in determining whether paper tickets are necessary. Many carriers have announced a complete phase-out of paper tickets in the near future. NOTE: You are required to safeguard all tickets and are liable for any expenses as a direct result of the lost or stolen ticket.

301-50.1(h) As a traveler, what advantage does an E-ticket offer me over a paper ticket?

An E-ticket cannot be lost, stolen, or forgotten. Airlines usually charge a \$75.00 charge for processing a lost ticket form. With E-tickets, you cannot lose them so you will not incur this cost. Additionally, if the trip is cancelled, the refunding process is much quicker because there is no need to mail the ticket back to the Airline or your Travel Agent for refunding.

301-51 PAYING TRAVEL EXPENSES

Subpart A—General Government Travel Card Policies

301-51.1 What is the required method of payment for official travel expenses?

To reduce the need for travelers to use their own money, as well as to foster effective cash management practices within the Department, employees who are expected to travel more than five times a year are required to obtain and use the Government travel card (charge card) for all official travel expenses unless they have an exemption.

301-51.2 What official travel expenses and/or classes of employees are exempt from the mandatory use of the Government travel card?

In addition to the expenses and classes of employees exempted in the FTR from the mandatory use of the Government travel card, the Department exempts the following:

- (a) Infrequent travelers - those employees who travel 5 times or less a year. If you are expected to travel more than 5 times a year, you are required to obtain the travel charge card;
- (b) Employees whose travel charge card has been canceled because of delinquency or use for non-official purposes. If your card has been canceled because of delinquency or use for non-official purposes, you are expected to fund your trip with personal funds. Your common carrier transportation will be charged to the centrally-billed travel account through the Travel Management Center. However, you **will not** be authorized to receive a travel advance;
- (c) Intermittent, seasonal, or temporary employees who have limited appointments;
- (d) Employees whose cards have been lost, stolen or damaged and they have not yet received replacement cards;
- (e) Individuals identified as Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs);
- (f) Commercial Service Officers assigned to locations outside of the Continental United States;
- (g) Employees traveling in countries where credit card fraud is widespread; e.g., former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; and

- (h) Employees who have a disability that would either limit or prevent them from using the card.

301-51.3 Who in my agency has the authority to grant exemptions from the mandatory use of the Government travel card?

The head of your bureau or operating unit will send any requests for exemptions to the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration.

301-51.5 How may I pay for official travel expenses if I receive an exemption from use of the Government travel card?

If you receive an exemption from the use of the Government travel card, you may use one or a combination of the following methods of payment:

- (a) Personal funds, including cash or personal charge card (except for the purchase of common carrier transportation);
- (b) Travel advances, except if your card has been canceled because of delinquency or use for non-official purposes; or
- (c) Centrally-billed travel accounts to pay for common carrier transportation.

301-51.7 What are the consequences of using the Government travel card for non-official travel purposes?

Your supervisor will contact your bureau's/operating unit's servicing human resources office for a determination of the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken if you use your card for non-official purposes or are delinquent in making payments to the bank. Such penalties will differ depending on the circumstances, but can include written reprimand or suspension to removal from your job.

Government Travel Card Responsibilities

The following offices and individuals have direct responsibilities for monitoring the use of the charge card:

301-51.10 What are the responsibilities of the Office of Administrative Services, Office of Administrative Operations with regard to the charge card program?

- a) To issue and interpret Departmental policy and procedures on the use of the charge card.
- b) To conduct periodic on-site reviews of the bureaus' oversight of charge card activities including a review of bureau written procedures and files maintained by the APC.
- c) To monitor the bureaus' compliance with guidelines in disciplining employees who abuse their charge card privileges.

301-51.11 What are bureau and operating unit official's responsibilities for the charge card program?

- a) To develop internal written procedures that will establish guidelines for the appropriate bureau/operating unit managers to follow in monitoring the use of the charge card by cardholders to ensure appropriateness of expenditures and the timeliness of payments. Bureau/operating unit officials will be responsible for determining the appropriate managers who will be delegated this authority and providing the APC with the name(s) of the manager(s).
- b) To designate an employee and an alternate to act as the bureau's/operating unit's APC who will administer the charge card program for the bureau/operating unit.
- c) To ensure that all employees in your bureau or operating unit who perform official travel are issued the charge card, unless an exemption has been granted.
- d) To notify the employee's immediate supervisor of any questionable or inappropriate charges and/or delinquencies of 60 days or more in the payment of accounts.

301-51.12 What are the employee's immediate supervisors' responsibilities for the charge card program?

- a) To notify the employee of any questionable or inappropriate charges and/or delinquencies and give the employee the opportunity to explain the charge or delinquency. A record shall be maintained of the notification and the explanation received from the employee.

- b) To take the appropriate disciplinary action if the explanation is inadequate. The supervisor shall contact their servicing human resources office, who will consult with the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) as needed, for a determination of the appropriate disciplinary action that shall be taken. Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-751, Appendix B, contains useful guidance on selecting a penalty appropriate to the offense. Disciplinary action that may be taken includes written reprimand to removal from Federal service. At the discretion of the supervisor, the card may be revoked at this time.
- c) To revoke the card if there is a second instance of inappropriate use or insufficient explanation for the delinquency. Appropriate disciplinary action, as recommended by the servicing human resources office and in consultation with OGC, shall also be taken. Disciplinary action that may be taken includes written reprimand to removal from Federal service.
- d) To provide the APC with the card for cancellation when it has been revoked because of inappropriate use or delinquency.
- e) To notify the APC when an employee is transferring between offices within a bureau/operating unit or between bureaus/operating units within the Department.
- f) To retrieve the charge card from the employee and return it to the APC for cancellation when an employee leaves, retires or transfers to another Government agency.
- g) To assure that the appropriate bureau official signs the designated box on the CD-126, Clearance of Employee Accountability, (or equivalent form) when the employee leaves the Department.

301-51.13 What is an Agency Program Coordinator (APC)?

An APC is an employee who has been designated by an appropriate manager within their bureau/operating unit to oversee the charge card program within their respective bureau/operating unit.

301-51.14 What are the APCs' responsibilities for the charge card program?

- a) To provide the bank with the names of the APCs and their alternate(s), their mailing address and telephone number. Also, provide this information to the Departmental Coordinator, Office of Administrative Services.
- b) To provide eligible employees requesting a charge card with a copy of these procedures along with a charge card application form.

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- c) To ensure that only DOC employees are issued the charge card. APCs will need to have access to an up-to-date personnel listing to ensure that only DOC employees receive charge cards. Non-Government employees are not eligible for the charge card. Employees from other Government agencies on detail to DOC will apply for a charge card within their respective agency, and not through DOC.
- d) To ensure that only employees who are eligible for the charge card will receive a charge card. APCs will need to check their current cardholder files to ensure that employees who have had their charge card canceled for misuse are not reissued a new charge card.
- e) To ensure completeness of both the charge card application, and the Employee Acknowledgment Statement. Both forms must be signed by the employee, and the Acknowledgment Statement must also be signed by the employee's supervisor.
- f) To complete sections designated for agency information and authorization on the application.
- g) To forward/fax a copy of the application to the bank. If the charge card is needed immediately, the APC will notify the bank to send the card by express delivery to the employee's home, office, or TDY site. APCs should follow-up with the employee to ensure that they receive their charge card in a timely fashion.
- h) To maintain a separate file for each employee that contains a copy of the charge card application as well as an Acknowledgment Statement. Files should indicate active versus inactive accounts. APCs will receive monthly personnel listings that show employees who have left Government services so that files can be kept up-to-date.
- i) To monitor the monthly charges and delinquency reports and notify via e-mail the employee, the employee's supervisor, the servicing human resources office, as well as an appropriate bureau manager(s), in accordance with established bureau/operating unit procedures, of possible misuse or delinquencies of 60 days or more.
- j) To document notifications and conversations in reference to misuse of the charge card. Record dates, names of people involved, and any evidence of notification. In addition, APCs may want to develop a standard worksheet to document actions taken.
- k) To maintain monthly charge and delinquency reports from vendor for a one-year period before they are destroyed.

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- l) To notify the bank when the charge card is returned (cut in half) to the APC for cancellation. Charge cards are returned to the APC when the employee's card has been revoked by the supervisor due to misuse, or when the employee leaves, retires, or transfers to another Government agency.
- m) To notify the bank when an employee transfers between bureaus/operating units within the Department. The APC of the losing bureau should notify the bank and the APC of the gaining bureau/operating unit.
- n) To attend any type of meeting/training provided by the bank that will enhance the effectiveness of the overall travel card program.

301-51.15 What are my responsibilities for the use of the Government travel card?

- a) Take the online GSA training course for the travel cardholder which is available at fss.gsa.gov/gsa-smartpay/traveltraining (copy and paste link into your browser to access the website) and print a completion certificate. The method for maintaining the certificate may vary from bureau to bureau. Check with your APC.
- b) Complete the employee information on the charge card application and sign the application.
- c) Complete and sign the Employee Acknowledgment Statement which acknowledges that you have received, read, and understands these policies and procedures related to the use of the charge card which states that the card shall be used only while on official travel and not for personal use or use at or in the vicinity of the official duty station or residence unless the use is related to approved official travel. Obtain the signature of the approving official or immediate supervisor on the Employee Acknowledgment Statement.
- d) Forward the online training certificate, charge card application and Employee Acknowledgment Statement to your servicing APC for processing. If the APC is unknown, call the Departmental Coordinator, Office of Administrative Services, Office of Administrative Operations, (202) 482-1818.
- e) Agree to the terms and conditions of the Government Travel Cardholder Agreement that is received with the card.
- f) Observe the following guidelines regarding the security of the charge card:
 - 1) Exercise the same care and responsibility for the security of the charge card and number as you would with a personal charge card. The charge card will be sent to either your home or office address as indicated on the charge card application.

- 2) Exercise security of the charge card by not allowing a secretary, an administrative assistant, a supervisor, or another employee or individual other than you to store or keep your government travel card.
- 3) Exercise caution and care in giving the charge card number to another employee to make travel arrangements on your behalf and when giving signature-on-file authorizations to TMCs.

g) To obtain cash advances from automatic teller machines (ATMs) or directly from a bank bearing the Visa logo in lieu of receiving advances from an imprest fund or finance office. It is **mandatory** that cardholders use their charge card to obtain cash advances from ATMs. ATM withdrawals should be limited to the meals and incidental expense rate (M&IE) for the location of the temporary duty location and other anticipated cash expenses that cannot be charged to the charge card. Employees are personally liable for cash advances obtained from ATMs even when the advance is lost or stolen.

h) To contact their APC to find out what the established weekly cash withdrawal limits are for their bureau. If the limit will not meet the employee's needs, it can be increased on a case-by-case basis. Employees must contact their servicing APC to request an increase. Cardholders will be charged an ATM transaction fee by the bank of 1.25% of the amount withdrawn which is reimbursable as a miscellaneous expense on the travel voucher. For ATM locations, call **1-800-CITIATM**. In lieu of using the ATM, employees may use their charge card to obtain cash from a teller in any bank bearing the Visa logo.

Cardholders will be issued Personal Identification Numbers (PIN) by Citibank. If you do not receive a PIN, does not remember the PIN, or wish to change the PIN, call Citibank at 1-800-790-7206, toll free in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas to receive a form that should be completed and submitted to Citibank.

i) To charge lodging, meals (where possible), rental of automobiles, gasoline, and other automobile related expenses on their charge card. Personal and family member use of the card and purchases made in retail stores are **strictly forbidden**. However, common or shared services or facilities, i.e., rooms, meals, etc., with family members may be charged to the card while on official travel. This does not apply to common carrier tickets. Only your official portion of the charged expense may be claimed on the travel voucher. NOTE: Use of the Government travel card at or in the vicinity of your ODS or residence is **strictly forbidden** unless its use is in connection with officially ordered travel.

j) To obey rules and regulations governing official travel, including use of the Government city-pair fares, American-Flag carriers, or TMCs.

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k) To procure common carrier transportation through a centrally-billed account established with the bank and managed by the TMC. However, employees are authorized to use their charge card to obtain common carrier tickets from the TMC. If you do not personally pick up the tickets and present your charge card, you shall complete a signature-on-file form to authorize the TMC to charge the transportation to your charge card. Charging tickets more than a week in advance should be avoided unless it is necessary to obtain a discount fare. Otherwise, a situation may develop where you receive your charge card bill for the ticket prior to receiving a reimbursement check for the travel.

l) To submit your travel vouchers to your servicing payment office within five (5) working days after the completion of travel. In most cases, you will be reimbursed for their expenses before payment is due to the bank. The cost of common carrier transportation purchased with the individually-billed charge card shall be itemized on the travel voucher. The original passenger ticket coupon for common carrier transportation (plane, bus, train) must be attached to the travel voucher. Claims for transportation must be limited to the amount of the ticket used and should not include any unused portion of the ticket. Adherence to this policy will ensure you receive reimbursement from the Department in sufficient time to pay the charge card bill.

m) To convert charges made in a foreign currency into U.S. dollars. The conversion rate will be at least as favorable as an interbank rate or, where required by law, an official rate. This rate shall be the one in existence at the time the transaction is processed. Amounts converted by common carriers such as airlines will be billed at rate the carriers use.

n) To comply with the following guidelines and procedures regarding the payment of the monthly charge card bills:

1) A monthly billing statement from the bank will be sent to you. A statement will be issued when expenditures are incurred or when a credit is posted to the account. If a statement is not received, contact Citibank at 1-800-790-7206 in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas.

301-51.15(o)

2) Payment, in full, is due and payable to Citibank upon receipt of the statement but must be received by Citibank no later than 25 calendar days from the closing date on the statement in which the charge appeared.

3) Conform with Employee Responsibilities and Conduct, 15 CFR 0.735-16, **which requires** Department of Commerce employees to pay each just financial obligation in a proper and timely manner. Corrective actions (cancellation of the card and/or disciplinary action) may be taken by the employee's supervisor if the employee fails to pay the bill in a proper and timely manner or uses the card for non-official purposes. Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-751 contains penalty guidelines for disciplinary action which ranges from written reprimand to removal from Federal service for violation of this conduct standard.

4) If the charge card bill contains a disputed charge, it is the employee's responsibility to contact Citibank at 1-800-790-7206 in the continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas. Citibank will need to know the following:

- Employee's name and account number
- Reference number of the disputed charges
- Establishment where charge was incurred
- Amount of charge
- Statement date

With this information, research can generally be conducted within a few days to resolve the problem.

o) To report your lost or stolen charge card **immediately** to Citibank, even if the card number is not known. Call Citibank at 1-800-790-7206, toll free in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas.

The employee is not liable for any fraudulent charges if the card is lost or stolen provided they promptly notify Citibank. The employee will be required to review any charges considered fraudulent and sign an affidavit of forgery stating he/she did not make the charges. All charges will be the employee's responsibility should he/she refuse to sign the affidavit.

A replacement charge card will be issued within 24 hours of notification, if the card has been lost or stolen in the United States, and within 48 hours of notification abroad. The card will be mailed to the cardholders billing address and should arrive in 7-10 days after the loss has been reported. If the employee is traveling and needs a card replaced immediately, Citibank will work with the employee to identify the best replacement option.

301-51.17

p) To notify his/her APC when he/she is transferring between bureaus/operating units within the Department. This notification is necessary in order for internal management reports and mailing addresses to be kept current. A new card will not be issued when the employee transfers within the Department. The APC of the losing bureau should notify Citibank to transfer the card and also notify the APC of the gaining bureau.

q) To return the card, cut in half, to his/her supervisor or the APC for cancellation when leaving, retiring, or transferring to another Government agency. If the coordinator is unknown, call the Departmental Coordinator in the Office of Administrative Services on (202) 482-1818.

301-51.16 What are the employee's rights in regard to the charge card program?

Under the terms of its contract with the GSA, Citibank **may not**:

- a) Conduct credit checks on employees designated to receive Government charge cards, unless specifically requested by a Federal agency.
- b) Release credit information to other than authorized employing agency officials or the individual cardholder.
- c) Sell or otherwise provide employee names or addresses to other commercial interests.
- d) Charge membership or interest.
- e) Include commercial advertisements or other forms of solicitation with monthly billing statements.
- f) Issue or cancel employees' cards without notifying the APC.
- g) Hold employees liable for any charges made with lost or stolen cards, provided the employee notifies Citibank promptly upon discovering that his/her card has been lost or stolen and signs an affidavit, if required by Citibank, stating he/she did not make the charges.

301-51.17 What are Citibank's responsibilities for the charge card program?

- a) To issue a charge card in the name of the employee upon receipt of a properly authorized application.
- b) To mail the charge card directly to the employee's address (home or work) within three (3) working days of receipt of the application from the coordinator. If the card is needed immediately, it will be delivered to the employee's home, work, or TDY location by express delivery.
- c) To mail monthly billing statements to the employee when expenditures are incurred or when a credit is posted to the account.
- d) To prepare and forward monthly reports (account activity, delinquency, suspension, cancellation, or other special reports as requested by the bureau) to the APC.
- e) To notify the APC before suspending or canceling an employee's charge card

because of nonpayment of his/her account by sending pre-suspension and pre-cancellation reports.

f) To cancel the charge card immediately upon notification from the APC for those employees who have retired, left the Department, or whose card has been revoked by a supervisor.

g) To forward an account renewal report to the APC at least 90 days prior to the expiration of each account. The APC will notify Citibank of those accounts that should not be renewed.

h) To renew the card every two-years from the date of issuance, unless the employee is delinquent in the payment of his/her account or the bureau manager determines that the employee no longer needs the card.

I) To follow the suspension and cancellation procedures for notifying cardholders when their accounts become delinquent.

Suspension and Cancellation Procedures

301-51.18 What are Citibank's suspension procedures?

Citibank will notify the cardholder when payment for the undisputed amount of the account has not been received 45 days from the closing date on the billing statement in which the charge appeared. If payment has not been received 55 calendar days from the closing date, the cardholder and the APC will be notified that suspension procedures will be initiated. The cardholder's account will be suspended if payment for the undisputed amount has not been received 61 calendar days from the closing date, unless directed by the APC. Upon payment of the undisputed amount, the account will be reinstated.

301-51.19 What are Citibank's cancellation procedures?

If payment of the undisputed amount has not been received by Citibank 120 calendar days from the closing date on the billing statement, Citibank will notify the cardholder and the APC that cancellation procedures will be initiated. The account will be canceled 126 days from the closing date on the billing statement, unless otherwise directed by the APC. The employee will be charged a late fee of 2.5% per month on the entire undisputed balance until payment is received. If the employee's account is canceled at this time, their accounts may be reported to the national credit bureaus.

301-51.20 What are Citibank's reinstatement procedures for cancelled accounts?

At the discretion of Citibank, canceled accounts may be reinstated upon the employee's payment of the undisputed amount, including late fees, and upon a written request from the bureau's CFO. Citibank may conduct a credit worthiness check prior to reinstatement of a canceled account. Employees may also be charged a reinstatement fee.

301-51.21 Can bureau managers, APCs, or any other official override Citibank's corporate policy regarding suspension, cancellation, and reinstatement procedures?

Generally, bureau managers, APCs, or any other official cannot override Citibank's corporate policy regarding suspension, cancellation, and reinstatement procedures, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Subpart B—Paying for Common Carrier Transportation

301-51.100(a) What method of payment must I use to procure transportation services for official travel?

Transportation services for official travel must be procured by one the following methods (in order of preference):

- 1) A centrally-billed travel account established with the servicing bank and managed by the TMC;
- 2) Government Travel Card - An individually-billed account established with the servicing bank and managed by the employee;
- 3) Government Transportation Request (GTR); and
- 4) Cash for transportation services under \$100.

301-51.102(a) Are there any exceptions for using cash to procure transportation services over \$100?

Yes. Exceptions for using cash to procure transportation services over \$100 are authorized under the following conditions:

- 1) Reduced group or excursion fares available from travel agents. Prior to travel, an administrative determination shall be made addressing the cost savings and affect on other regulations to secure reduced group or charter fare arrangements available only by cash purchase through travel agents. *See DOC, Chapter 301-2.5(c)) for approval procedures for the use of reduced group or excursion fares.*
- 2) Overseas tour renewal agreement travel. Relative to tour renewal travel, an employee is obligated to pay, at personal expense, the transportation costs of dependents who travel prior to the employee's eligibility date. In those instances, reimbursement may be made, without regard to the \$100 limitation, after the employee has performed actual tour renewal travel. However, those employees who are eligible for tour renewal leave and travel with their dependents must have that travel arranged in accordance with the applicable regulations.

301-51.102(b) How is the use of cash to pay for common carrier transportation exceeding \$100 authorized?

Memoranda of request for the use of cash to pay for common carrier transportation exceeding \$100 must be submitted to the appropriate delegation within your bureau. The memoranda of request must come from the

301-51.102(d)

requesting/approving official, must fully explain why cash was used, and must be accompanied by:

- A copy of the travel authorization;
- A copy of the passenger's ticket receipt (must show a form of payment);
- and

-Original travel voucher or reclaim travel voucher.

By signing the travel voucher, the traveler assigns to the United States Government any rights he/she may have in connection with any reimbursable transportation charges.

301-51.102(c) Will I receive full reimbursement when I use personal funds to pay for transportation costs exceeding \$100?

Under emergency circumstances, you **may** receive full reimbursement when you use personal funds to pay for transportation costs that exceed \$100 when:

- 1) the use of a centrally-billed account, individual Government travel card, or GTR is not possible; and/or
- 2) you are a new employee, infrequent traveler, or invitational traveler unaware of the proper procedures to procure common carrier transportation.

You **will not** receive full reimbursement when you use personal funds to pay for transportation costs exceeding \$100 when it's for your convenience, and for any other non-emergency reason.

301-51.102(d) What reimbursement will I receive when it's determined that the cash payment for transportation expenses was made under non-emergency circumstances?

When it's determined that the cash payment for transportation expenses was made under non-emergency circumstances, reimbursement will not exceed the cost which would have been chargeable to the Government had the traveler used one of the Government-provided methods of procurement. Cash will not be used to circumvent the regulations governing airline city-pair contracts. You will be responsible for all additional costs involved, i.e., more costly modes, use of foreign-flag carriers, or extra-fare accommodations, unless otherwise approved.

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301-51.102(e) How will my cash purchase request be reviewed/approved?

Before a request is approved, the circumstances involved for each case will be thoroughly reviewed. The following facts will be considered:

- 1) Does the traveler perform frequent TDY travel?
- 2) Was the traveler in a position to be aware of the regulation on the prohibition of the use of cash?
- 3) Was the purchase of transportation using personal funds primarily for the traveler's convenience?

See DOC, Chapter 301-2.5(d) for cash purchase procedures.

301-51.102(f) Is there any reason my agency would need to maintain cash purchase records?

Yes. Offices responsible for approving cash purchases shall maintain copies of travel vouchers/cash purchase records and make them available for site audit by GSA auditors for six years and three months.

Subpart C—Receiving Travel Advances

301-51.199 What types of employees may receive travel advances for official travel?

The following types of employees are entitled to receive travel advances for official travel:

- a) Infrequent travelers (those employees who travel 5 times or less a year);
- b) Intermittent, seasonal, or temporary employees who have limited appointments;
- c) Employees whose cards have been lost, stolen or damaged and they have not yet received replacement cards;
- d) Individuals identified as Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs);
- e) Commercial Service Officers assigned to locations outside of the Continental United States; and
- f) Employees who have a disability that would either limit or prevent them from using the card.

301-51.201 What is the maximum amount that my agency may advance?

The maximum amount that can be advanced is limited to 80% of the estimated cash expenses, unless a determination is made by the approving official that the 80% limitation will result in a financial hardship for the employee. In a case of financial hardship, the approving official may approve up to 100% of the estimated cash expenses, not including transportation billed directly to the Government, for an individual trip or for a blanket travel order, not to exceed a 45-day period. In **no case** shall a travel advance exceed 100% of the estimated cash expenses. Advances may be used only for proper expenditures under the laws and regulations applicable to the type of travel involved.

301-51.202(a) How is a travel advance collected if it is not offset by a travel voucher or repaid by personal check?

Each bureau's servicing payment center will maintain a record of each employee's travel advance account and will apply strict collection procedures when travel advances are not offset by travel vouchers or repaid by personal checks. Form CD-369, Travel Advance, contains a "Notice of Intent" which states that a \$15 administrative charge will be assessed when:

- 1) a travel advance amount is not repaid or accounted for and is kept outstanding beyond the specified time period provided in the notice sent to the employee; and
- 2) an administrative offset against the employee's salary payment(s) is used to collect the excessive amount.

301-51.204 What are the approving official's responsibilities when approving travel advances?

Approving officials are responsible for ensuring that advances are not requested until needed. By signing the advance, the approving official has indicated that he/she has reviewed the amount and that the amount is appropriate to the circumstances involved.

301-51.205 How do I obtain a travel advance?

Travel advances will be obtained by submitting the Form CD-369, Travel Advance, and a copy of the travel order prior to TDY to your servicing payment office where they will direct deposit the advance into your bank account. Where available, under emergency circumstances, travel advances can be obtained from imprest fund cashiers in the form of convenience checks. Requests for travel advances of less than \$100 are not cost effective and are discouraged.

301-51.206 How do we ensure that invitational travelers offset/repay their travel advance balance?

To ensure that travel advance balances are offset/repaid, the office inviting the invitational traveler is required to get the home and/or business address of the invitational traveler, as well as prepare and submit travel vouchers to the servicing finance office before the traveler returns to their residence or place of business.

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF THE
CONTRACTOR-ISSUED GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CHARGE CARD**

A. DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

The use of the contractor-issued Government travel charge card is **mandatory** for all Departmental employees who travel on official business, unless an exemption has been granted. The use of the card is limited to expenses incurred incident to officially authorized Government travel. Use of the card at or in the vicinity of the official duty station or residence is **strictly forbidden** unless its use is in connection with officially ordered travel. Personal and family member use of the card and purchases made in retail stores are also **strictly forbidden**. However, common or shared services or facilities (i.e., rooms, meals, etc.) with family members or business associates may be charged to the card while on official business. This does **not** apply to common carrier transportation tickets. **Only** your official portion of the charged expense may be claimed on the travel voucher.

Possession and use of the card does not relieve the employee from observing rules and regulations governing official travel, including use of Government city-pair contract carriers, American-Flag carriers, or Travel Management Centers (authorized travel agents under contract with the Government).

Neither bureau managers, charge card coordinators, nor any other bureau officials have the authority to override the contractor's corporate policy regarding suspension or cancellation of employee accounts, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

The following offices and individuals have direct responsibilities for monitoring the use of the contractor-issued Government travel charge card:

1. Office of Administrative Services, Office of Administrative Operations. The Office of Administrative Services will:
 - (a) Issue and interpret Departmental policy and procedures on the use of the charge card.
 - (b) Conduct periodic on-site reviews of the bureaus' oversight of charge card activities including a review of bureau written procedures and files maintained by the charge card coordinator.
 - (c) Monitor the bureaus' compliance with guidelines in disciplining employees who abuse their charge card privileges.

2. Departmental bureau and operating unit officials. Appropriate officials in Departmental bureaus and operating units will:
 - (a) Develop internal written bureau/operating unit procedures that will establish guidelines for the appropriate bureau/operating unit managers to follow in monitoring the use of the charge card by cardholders to ensure appropriateness of expenditures and the timeliness of payments. Bureau/operating unit officials will be responsible for determining the appropriate managers that will be delegated this authority.
 - (b) Designate an employee and an alternate to act as the bureau's/operating unit's APC who will administer the Government charge card program for their bureau/operating unit.
 - (c) Ensure that all employees in your bureau or operating unit who perform official travel are issued the card, unless an exemption has been granted.
 - (d) Sign (or designate the employee's immediate supervisor) to sign the certification block on the Employee Acknowledgment Statement (Appendix B to this Exhibit).
 - (e) Review the monthly reports issued by the contractor and notify the employee's immediate supervisor of any questionable or inappropriate charges and/or delinquencies of 60 days or more in the payment of accounts.
3. Employee's immediate supervisor. The employee's immediate supervisor will:
 - (a) Notify the employee of any questionable or inappropriate charges and/or delinquencies and give the employee the opportunity to explain the charge or delinquency. A record shall be maintained of the notification and the explanation received from the employee.
 - (b) Take the appropriate disciplinary action if the explanation is inadequate. The supervisor shall contact the bureau's/operating unit's servicing human resources office, who will consult with the OGC as needed, for a determination of the appropriate disciplinary action that shall be taken. DAO 202-751, Appendix B, contains useful guidance on selecting a penalty appropriate to the offense. Disciplinary action that may be taken ranges from written reprimand to removal from the Federal service. At the discretion of the supervisor, the card may be revoked at this time.
 - (c) Revoke the card if there is a second instance of inappropriate use or insufficient explanation for the delinquency. Appropriate disciplinary action, as recommended by the servicing human resources office and in consultation with OGC, shall also be taken. Disciplinary action that may be taken includes written reprimand to removal from the Federal service.

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- (d) Provide the APC with the card for cancellation when it has been revoked because of inappropriate use or delinquency.
 - (e) Notify the APC when an employee is transferring between offices within a bureau/operating unit or between bureaus/operating units within the Department.
 - (f) Retrieve the charge card from the employee and return it to the APC for cancellation when an employee leaves, retires or transfers to another Government agency.
 - (g) Assure that the appropriate bureau official signs the designated box on the CD-126, Clearance of Employee Account- ability, (or equivalent form) when the employee leaves the Department.
4. Agency Travel Program Coordinator (APC). The bureau/operating unit employee and alternate designated by the appropriate official in their bureau/operating unit as APCs to administer the charge card program for their respective bureau/operating unit will:
- (a) Provide the contractor/card issuer with the names of the coordinator and alternate, bureau/operating unit name, mailing addresses and telephone numbers. Also, provide this information to the Departmental Coordinator, OAS, OAO.
 - (b) Provide eligible employees requesting a card with an application form and a copy of this Exhibit.
 - (c)) Ensure completeness of employee information on the employee card account application, that the employee has completed and signed the Employee Acknowledgment Statement included as Appendix B to this Exhibit, and that the approving official/supervisor has also signed the Acknowledgment Statement.
 - (d) Complete sections designated for agency information and authorization on the employee card account application. (Refer to Appendix A of this Exhibit.)
 - (e) Forward the original of the application to the contractor by fax or mail. If the card is needed immediately, the APC shall notify the contractor to send the card by express delivery to the employee's home or office address.
 - (f) Maintain a central file of the signed Employee Acknowledgment Statements along with a copy of the employee's application for all employees who are current cardholders.
 - (g) Review the monthly charges and delinquency reports and notify the appropriate bureau manager(s), employee's immediate supervisor, or the employee, in accordance with established bureau/operating unit procedures, of possible misuse or delinquencies of 60 days or more.
 - (h) Maintain monthly charge and delinquency reports for a one-year period before they are destroyed.

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- (I) Notify the contractor to cancel the card when notified that an employee's card has been revoked by the supervisor because of inappropriate use or delinquency.
 - (j) Notify the contractor when an employee transfers between bureaus/operating units within the Department. The APC of the losing bureau should notify the contractor and the APC of the gaining bureau.
 - (k) Notify the contractor in a timely manner to cancel the card when an employee leaves, retires or transfers to another Government agency.
5. Employees. Employees who are eligible to receive the charge card will:
- (a) Complete the employee information on the charge card account application and sign the application (see Appendix A for completion instructions).
 - (b) Complete and sign the Employee Acknowledgment Statement (Appendix B of this Exhibit) acknowledging that they have received, read, and understand these policies and procedures related to the use of the contractor-issued travel charge card which states that the card shall be used only while on official travel and not for personal use or use at or in the vicinity of the official duty station or residence unless the use is related to approved official travel. Obtain the signature of the approving official or immediate supervisor on the Employee Acknowledgment Statement.
 - (c) Forward the above two documents to their APC for processing. If the coordinator is unknown, call the Departmental Coordinator in the OAO at (202) 482-1818.
 - (d) Agree to the terms and conditions of the contractor's Government Card Services Travel Program Cardholder Account Agreement that is received with the card.
 - (e) Observe the following guidelines regarding the security of the card:
 - (1) Exercise the same care and responsibility for the security of the card and number as he/she would with a personal charge card. The card will be sent to the employee's home address.
 - (2) Exercise security of the card by not allowing a secretary, administrative or executive officer, or supervisor to store or keep the card.
 - (3) Exercise caution and care in giving the card number to another employee to make travel arrangements on their behalf and when giving signature-on-file authorizations (see Appendix C of this Exhibit) to Travel Management Centers (TMC) (authorized travel agents under contract with the Government).
 - (f) Obtain cash advances from automatic teller machines (ATMs) using their travel charge card in lieu of receiving advances from the imprest fund or from the finance office. Cardholders will be issued Personal Identification Numbers (PIN)

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by the contractor. If an employee does not receive a PIN, does not remember the PIN, or wishes to change the PIN, he/she should call Citibank at 1-800-790-7206, toll free in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas to receive a form that should be completed and submitted to Citibank. Employees should contact their APC to find out what the established weekly withdrawal limits are for their bureau. If the limit will not meet the employees needs, it can be increased on a case-by-case basis. Employees must contact their APC to request an increase. Cardholders will be charged an ATM transaction fee of 1.25% of the amount withdrawn which is reimbursable as a miscellaneous expense on the travel voucher.

For ATM locations, call 1-800-CITIATM. In lieu of using the ATM, employees may use their card to obtain cash from a teller in any bank bearing the Visa logo.

(g) Submit their travel vouchers to their designated payment office within five (5) working days after the completion of travel. In most cases, employees will be reimbursed for their expenses before payment is due to the contractor.

(h) Comply with the following guidelines and procedures regarding the payment of the monthly charge card bills:

(1) A monthly billing statement from the contractor/card issuer will be sent to the employee's home address. A statement will be issued when expenditures are incurred or when a credit is posted to the account. If a statement is not received, the employee should contact Citibank at 1-800-790-7206 in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas.

(2) Payment, in full, is due and payable to the contractor upon receipt of the statement but must be received by the contractor no later than 25 calendar days from the closing date on the statement in which the charge appeared. **The employee is personally liable for all charges which have been incurred, regardless of whether they exceed the amount reimbursable under Department travel regulations.**

(3) Conform with Employee Responsibilities and Conduct, 15 CFR 0.735-16, **which requires** DOC employees to pay each just financial obligation in a proper and timely manner. Corrective actions (cancellation of the card and/or disciplinary action) may be taken by the employee's supervisor if the employee fails to pay the bill in a proper and timely manner or uses the card for non-official purposes. Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-751 contains penalty guidelines for disciplinary action which ranges from written reprimand to removal from Federal service for violation of this conduct standard.

(4) If the charge card bill contains a disputed charge, it is the employee's responsibility to contact the contractor (Citibank) at 1-800-790-7206 in the continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada,

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or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas. The contractor will need to know the following:

- Employee's name and account number
- Reference number of the disputed charges
- Establishment where charge was incurred
- Amount of charge
- Statement date

With this information, research can generally be conducted within a few days to resolve the problem.

(I) Notify his/her APC when he/she is transferring between bureaus/operating units within the Department. This notification is necessary in order for internal management reports and mailing addresses to be kept current. A new card will not be issued when the employee transfers within the Department. The APC of the losing bureau should notify the contractor to transfer the card and also notify the APC of the gaining bureau.

(j) Return the card, cut in half, to his/her supervisor or the APC for cancellation when leaving, retiring, or transferring to another Government agency. If the coordinator is unknown, call the Departmental Coordinator in the OAO at (202) 482-1818.

6. The contractor/card issuer. The contractor/card issuer will:

(a) Issue a charge card in the name of the employee upon receipt of a properly authorized application.

(b) Mail the charge card directly to the employee's home address within three (3) working days of receipt of the application from the coordinator. If the card is needed immediately, it will be delivered to the employee's home or office by express delivery.

(c) Mail monthly billing statements to the employee's home address when expenditures are incurred or when a credit is posted to the account.

(d) Prepare and forward monthly reports (account activity, delinquency, suspension, cancellation, or other special reports as requested by the bureau) to the APC.

(e) Notify the APC before suspending or canceling an employee's card because of nonpayment of his/her account by sending pre-suspension and pre-cancellation reports.

(f) Follow the suspension and cancellation procedures contained in paragraph C. below for notifying cardholders when their accounts become delinquent.

(g) Cancel the charge card immediately upon notification from the APC for those

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employees who have retired, left the Department, or whose card has been revoked by a supervisor.

(h) Forward an account renewal report to the APC at least 90 days prior to the expiration of each account. The APC will notify the contractor of those accounts that should not be renewed.

(I) Renew the card every two-years from the date of issuance, unless the employee is delinquent in the payment of his/her account or the bureau manager determines that the employee no longer needs the card.

C. SUSPENSION AND CANCELLATION PROCEDURES

1. Suspension Procedures. The contractor will notify the cardholder when payment for the undisputed amount of the account has not been received 45 days from the closing date on the billing statement in which the charge appeared. If payment has not been received 55 calendar days from the closing date, the cardholder and the APC will be notified that suspension procedures will be initiated. The cardholder's account will be suspended if payment for the undisputed amount has not been received 61 calendar days from the closing date, unless directed by the APC. Upon payment of the undisputed amount, the account will be reinstated.
2. Cancellation Procedures. If payment of the undisputed amount has not been received by the contractor 120 calendar days from the closing date on the billing statement, the contractor will notify the cardholder and the APC that cancellation procedures will be initiated. The account will be canceled 126 days from the closing date on the billing statement, unless otherwise directed by the APC. The employee will be charged a late fee of 2.5% per month on the entire undisputed balance until payment is received. If the employee's account is canceled at this time, their accounts may be reported to the national credit bureaus.
3. Reinstatement of Canceled Accounts. At the discretion of the contractor, canceled accounts may be reinstated upon payment of the undisputed amount, including late fees. The contractor may conduct a credit worthiness check prior to reinstatement of a canceled account. Employees may also be charged a reinstatement fee.

C. TRAVEL PROCEDURES

1. Authorization, Advances, and Vouchers.
 - (a) All official travel must be authorized on Form CD-29, Travel Order, or other authorized form. In order to obtain common carrier transportation at the Government discount fare, a copy of the approved travel order must be presented to the ticketing agent at the time payment is made for the ticket.
 - (b) It is **mandatory** that cardholders use their charge card to obtain cash

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advances from automatic teller machines (ATMs) or directly from a bank bearing the Visa logo instead of receiving advances from the imprest fund or the finance office. Cash advances should be limited to the meals and incidental expense rate (M&IE) for the location of the temporary duty location and other cash expenses that are expected to be incurred that cannot be charged. Travelers shall charge common carrier transportation, lodging, meals (where possible), rental of automobiles, and gasoline and other automobile related expenses on their contractor-issued Government charge card.

- (c) An employee may use his/her charge card to obtain common carrier tickets from the airlines or TMC. Charging tickets more than a week in advance should be avoided unless it is necessary to obtain a discount fare. Otherwise, a situation may develop where an employee receives his/her charge card bill for the ticket prior to receiving a reimbursement check for the travel.
- (d) Department policy **requires** the employee to submit a properly prepared and approved CD-370 Travel Voucher, SF-1012 Travel Voucher, or other authorized form to the designated payment office within five (5) working days after the completion of travel. The cost of common carrier transportation purchased with the individually-billed charge card shall be itemized on the travel voucher. The original passenger ticket coupon for common carrier transportation (plane, bus, train) must be attached to the travel voucher. Claims for transportation must be limited to the amount of the ticket used and should not include any unused portion of the ticket. Adherence to this policy will ensure that the employee receives reimbursement from the Department in sufficient time to pay the charge card bill.

2. Unused Tickets.

- (a) If a transportation ticket purchased with the employee's individual contractor-issued Government travel charge card is completely unused, the ticket and passenger coupon should be returned to the TMC or airline representative by the employee and a refund credit receipt should be obtained. This receipt should be retained until the appropriate credit is issued on a subsequent billing statement. The employee **shall not** submit his/her unused ticket purchased with his/her individual charge card to the bureau payment office with the travel voucher.
- (b) If a transportation ticket purchased with the employee's individual contractor-issued Government travel charge card is partially used, the unused tickets and passenger coupon shall be returned to the TMC or airline representative by the employee and a refund credit receipt should be obtained. Copies of the passenger coupon (if available) along with the charge and refund credit receipt slips must be submitted with the travel voucher in order to obtain reimbursement for the cost of the partially used

ticket.

- (c) If the transportation charge appears on the charge card statement, but the credit does not, immediate credit can be received in the following way:
 - I. Subtract the amount of the credit from your payment.
 - ii. Send a copy of the refund credit receipt with the payment to the contractor/card issuer.
 - iii. The contractor/card issuer will monitor the account and take whatever steps are necessary to obtain the credit. The cardholder will be advised of the final resolution.
- (d) Transportation tickets purchased on the Government Travel Account (GTA), a centrally billed account established with the travel charge card contractor and a Travel Management Center (TMC), or a Government Transportation Request (GTR) shall be returned to the appropriate bureau payment office to obtain a credit to the employee's appropriation code which was charged with the original ticket.

3. Lost Tickets.

- (a) Most carriers will attempt to reissue a ticket according to their individual procedures. Employees should explain their ticket loss to the ticket agent and request a replacement ticket. Most carriers will comply if boarding passes have not already been issued against the lost ticket and if the employee can produce proper identification and a copy of his/her travel orders. However, if an replacement ticket cannot be provided, the employee will need to purchase a new ticket using their individual contractor-issued Government travel charge card and file a Lost Ticket Application immediately with the office location where the original ticket was purchased.
- (b) To obtain a credit on the charge card statement, a copy of the Lost Ticket Application should be submitted following the procedure in 2(c) above.
- (c) If the original ticket was partially used, a copy of the Lost Ticket Application should be submitted with the travel voucher, along with the charge slip. Employees may be personally responsible for the cost of the lost tickets and for any Lost Ticket Application service charges.

4. Charges Made in Foreign Countries.

Charges made in foreign currency will be converted into U.S. dollars. The conversion rate used will be at least as favorable as an interbank rate or, where required by law, an official rate. This rate shall be the one in existence at the time the transaction is processed. Amounts converted by common carriers such as airlines will be billed at rates the carriers use.

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E. LOST OR STOLEN CARDS

Employees shall report lost or stolen contractor-issued Government travel charge cards **immediately** to the contractor, even if the card number is not known. Call Citibank at 1-800-790-7206, toll free in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas.

The employee is not liable for any fraudulent charges if the card is lost or stolen provided they promptly notify the contractor/card issuer. The employee will be required to review any charges considered fraudulent and sign an affidavit of forgery stating he/she did not make the charges. All charges will be the employee's responsibility should he/she refuse to sign the affidavit.

A replacement charge card will be issued within 24 hours of notification, if the card has been lost or stolen in the United States, and within 48 hours of notification abroad. The card will be mailed to the cardholders billing address and should arrive in 7-10 days after the loss has been reported. If the employee is traveling and needs a card replaced immediately, the contractor will work with the employee to identify the best replacement option.

F. EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

Under the terms of its contract with the General Services Administration, the contractor/card issuer **may not**:

(1) Conduct credit checks on employees designated to receive Government charge cards, unless specifically requested by a Federal agency.

- (2) Release credit information to other than authorized employing agency officials or the individual cardholder.
- (3) Sell or otherwise provide employee names or addresses to other commercial interests.
- (4) Charge membership or interest.
- (5) Include commercial advertisements or other forms of solicitation with monthly billing statements.
- (6) Issue or cancel employees' cards without notifying the Agency/Organization Program Coordinator (APC).
- (7) Hold employees liable for any charges made with lost or stolen cards, provided the employee notifies the contractor/card issuer promptly upon discovering that his/her card has been lost or stolen and signs an affidavit, if required by the contractor/card issuer, stating he/she did not make the charges.

G. PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

The following information is provided to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a):

The information requested on the card application form is collected pursuant to Executive Order 9397 and 5 U.S.C. Chapter 57 (as amended) for the purposes of recording travel expenses incurred by the employee and to claim entitlements and allowances as prescribed in DOC Travel Handbook. The purpose of the collection of this information is to provide Government agencies necessary information on the GSA travel card contract which provides travelers with charge cards for official travel and related expenses, attendant operational and control support, and management information reports for expense control. Routine uses which may be made of the collected information and other account information in the system of records entitled *Travel Charge Card Program GSA/GOVT-3* are as follows:

- (1) transfers to appropriate Federal, State, local, or foreign agencies when relevant to civil, criminal, administrative, or regulatory investigations;
- (2) pursuant to a request of another Federal agency in connection with hiring, retention, issuing a security clearance, reporting an employee investigation, clarifying a job, letter or contract or issuing a license, grant, or other benefit;
- (3) to a Member of Congress or to a Congressional Staff Member in response to an inquiry of the Congressional Office made at the request of the individual about whom the record is maintained;
- (4) to officials of labor organizations when necessary to their duties of exclusive representation;
- (5) to a Federal agency for accumulating reporting data and monitoring the system; (6) GSA contract travel agents assigned to agencies for billing of travel expenses;
- (7) listing, reports, and records to GSA by the contractor to conduct audits of carrier

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charges to the Government; and

(8) any other use specified by GSA in the system of records entitled *Travel Charge Card Program GSA/GOVT-3*, as published in the Federal Register periodically by GSA.

The information requested is not mandatory. Failure to provide the information will nullify the application, and a charge card will not be issued to the employee.

APPENDIX A

**Instructions for Completing the Contractor-Issued
Government Travel Charge Card Application Form**

Employees should contact their Agency/Organization Program Coordinator (APC) to obtain a charge card application form. If the APC is unknown, call the Departmental Coordinator in the Office of Administrative Services on (202) 482-1818.

SECTION I - INSTRUCTIONS

This section contains the general instructions.

SECTION II - CARDHOLDER INFORMATION

These blocks must be completed by the employee. The information shall be written above the line requesting the information. The employee shall include their full name, bureau/operating unit name, verification information (mother's maiden name), social security number, home and business mailing addresses and phone numbers, E-mail address, fax number, and circle "yes" for City Pair Program. The lines for "4th Line Embossing" and "Discretionary Codes" and "Master Accounting Codes" are left blank. The APC will complete these if they are required by the bureau/operating unit.

**SECTIONS III - REPORTING PARAMETERS, IV - AUTHORIZATION
PARAMETERS, AND V - PLASTIC TYPE**

These sections will be completed by the APC.

SECTION VI - CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE

The employee must sign and date the application form and provide it, along with the signed Employee Acknowledgment Statement (Appendix B of this Exhibit) to their APC.

**SECTION VII - AGENCY/ORGANIZATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR
SIGNATURE**

The APC will sign the application form and forward it by fax or mail to the contractor. The APC will maintain a copy of the application along with the Employee Acknowledgment Statement.

APPENDIX B
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT AND
APPROVING OFFICIAL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I certify that I (1) have received, read and understand the policies and procedures prescribed by DOC Travel Handbook issued by the Director for Administrative Services, pertaining to the Contractor-Issued Government Travel Charge Card Program; (2) shall abide by such policies, procedures, and other instructions as may be issued by the Department, my bureau/operating unit and the contractor/card issuer concerning the use of the card issued to me; and (3) acknowledge that the card is to be used **only** for expenses incurred incident to officially authorized Government travel.

(1) _____
Employee Signature and Date

Name (Type or Print)

Title

Organization and Bureau

(2) _____
Approving Official/Supervisor Signature and Date

Name (Type or Print)

Title

Telephone Number

NOTE TO EMPLOYEE: Your charge card application will not be processed unless accompanied by this completed and signed form.

NOTE TO APPROVING OFFICIAL/SUPERVISOR: Your signature certifies that this employee is authorized to obtain the contractor-issued Government travel charge card. You will be notified of any inappropriate charges or if the employee's account becomes delinquent.

301-52 CLAIMING REIMBURSEMENT

301-52.6(a) What form do I use to claim travel expenses for TDY travel?

You will submit the Form CD-370, "Travel Voucher" or other authorized form used by your bureau to claim travel expenses. Reimbursement is paid only if it is \$1.00 or more.

See <http://www.osc.doc.gov/forms/> for a copy of the CD-370.

301-52.6(b) What form do I use to claim local travel expenses?

Mileage claims for local travel (within a 50-mile radius of the official duty station) should be submitted on an SF-1164 "Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business". Such travel should be performed wholly within a 24-hour period and should not include per diem or common carrier transportation.

301-52.7(a) When must I submit my travel claim for relocation costs?

You must submit your travel claim for relocation costs after completion of each phase of the move.

301-52.7(b) When must I submit my travel claim for local costs?

You must submit your travel claim for local costs on a monthly basis.

301-52.11(a) What must I do to challenge a disallowed claim within DOC?

You must provide a copy of the travel voucher, travel order, statement showing the disallowed items, any relevant receipts, and a memorandum of explanation through your appropriate bureau head to the GSA Board of Contract Appeals for a final determination of your claim.

301-52.17 Within how many calendar days after I submit a proper travel claim must my agency reimburse my allowable expenses?

Your bureau finance/payment office must reimburse you within 30 calendar days after you submit a proper travel voucher to your approving official. It is your responsibility to ensure that the voucher is proper. A proper travel voucher is one that contains your signature and the date that you sign the voucher, a copy of your travel order, receipts for lodging, common carrier transportation, rental car, and for any other expense exceeding \$75, and requests post approval for expenses that were not originally authorized on the travel order. Your bureau will implement procedures to track submission of travel claims.

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301-52.18 Within how many calendar days after I submit a travel claim must my agency notify me of any error that would prevent payment within 30 calendar days after submission?

Your approving official or finance/payment office must notify you within seven days after you have submitted your travel claim of any error that would prevent payment within 30 calendar days after submission, and you must be provided with the reason(s) why your claim is not proper. The 30-day period stops when the voucher is returned to you and begins again when you have resubmitted the corrected voucher to your approving official.

301-52.19 Will I receive a late payment fee if my agency fails to reimburse me within 30 calendar days after I submit a proper travel voucher?

Yes, you will receive the late fee in addition to the amount due to you. The late fee may be paid separately from your reimbursement.

301-52.22 Will any late payment fees I receive be reported as wages on a Form W-2?

No, you will not receive a Form W-2. However, in accordance with IRS guidelines, your finance/payment office will issue you a Form-1099, Miscellaneous Income-Interest, by January 31 of the year following the calendar year in which payments were made.

301-52.23 Is the additional fee, which is equal to any late payment charge that the card contractor would have been able to charge had I not paid the bill, considered income?

Yes, this fee is considered income and would be reported on a Form W-2. However, Departmental employees are not charged late fees by the travel charge card contractor until the account becomes 120 calendar days delinquent and has been canceled. If your account falls into this category, you are responsible for the payment of late fees. The Department is not liable for the payment of any late fees in these situations unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevented the reimbursement of your claim within 30 days after you submitted a proper travel claim to your approving official. You are required to submit your travel claim within 5 working days after you complete your trip, or every 30 days if you are in a continuous travel status.

**301-54 Collection of Undisputed Delinquent Amounts Owed to the Contractor
 Issuing the Individually Billed Travel Charge Card**

Subpart A—General Rules

**301-54.1 Is my agency allowed to collect undisputed delinquent amounts that I owe to
 a Government travel charge card contractor?**

Yes, upon written request from the travel charge card contractor, the Department will collect from your disposable pay any undisputed delinquent amounts that you owe to the travel charge card contractor. The Department must follow the due process requirements contained in paragraph 301-54.100 of the FTR before any deductions can be made.

Subchapter D—Agency Responsibilities

301-70 Internal Policy and Procedure Requirements

**Subpart H—Policies and Procedures Relating to Mandatory Use of the Government
Contractor-Issued Travel Charge Card for Official Travel**

301-70.700 Must our employees use a Government contractor-issued travel charge card for official travel expenses?

Yes, all Department employees who perform official travel more than five times a year must use the Government contractor-issued travel charge card for all official travel expenses, unless the expenses or class of employees have been exempted. Unless an exemption has been granted, employees who fail to use their government contractor issued travel charge card for appropriate charges may be subject to discipline.

301-70.701 Who has the authority to grant exemptions to mandatory use of Government contractor-issued travel charge card for official travel?

Bureau heads or heads of operating units shall forward all requests for exemptions to the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration.

301-70.702 Must we notify the Administrator of General Services when we grant an exemption?

The Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration will notify the Administrator of General Services of any exemptions that have been granted in the Department.

301-70.704 What expenses and/or classes of employees are exempt from the mandatory use of the Government contractor-issued travel charge card?

In addition to the expenses and classes of employees exempted in the FTR from the mandatory use of the travel charge card, the Department exempts the following:

- (a) Infrequent travelers - employees that travel five times a year or less. If the employee is expected to travel more than five times a year, a travel charge card is required;
- (b) Employees whose travel charge card has been canceled because of delinquency or use for non-official purposes. If the employee's card has been canceled because of delinquency or non-official use, they are expected to fund their trip with personal funds. Their common carrier

transportation will be charged to the centrally-billed travel account or to a Government Transportation Request (GTR) through the Travel Management Center. However, they **will not** be authorized to receive a travel advance; and

- (c) Intermittent, seasonal, or temporary employees who have limited appointments.

301-70.705 What methods of payment for official travel expenses may we authorize when an exemption from use of the Government contractor-issued travel charge card is granted?

You may authorize employees who have been granted an exemption from the use of the travel charge card one or a combination of the following methods of payment:

- (a) Personal funds, including cash or a personal charge card (except for the purchase of common carrier transportation);
- (b) Travel advances, except those employees whose travel charge card has been canceled because of delinquency or use for non-official purposes;
- (c) Centrally-billed travel accounts to pay for common carrier transportation; or
- (d) Government Transportation Request (GTR).

301-70.707 What are the consequences of using the Government contractor-issued travel charge card for non-official travel purposes?

Department Administrative Order 202-751, Appendix B, lists penalties appropriate to the offense. Offenses that may apply include “Use of or allowing the use of Government funds, property, personnel, or other resources for unauthorized purposes,” and “Failure to pay a just financial obligation in a proper and timely manner.” The penalties that apply to these offenses are:

- First Offense: Written reprimand to removal.
- Second Offense: 5 days suspension to removal.
- Subsequent Offense: 30 days suspension to removal.

You should contact your bureau’s servicing human resources office for a determination of the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken when an employee uses the travel charge card for non-official purposes or is delinquent in making payments to the travel charge card contractor.

301-71 Agency Travel Accountability Requirements

Subpart C—Travel Claims for Reimbursement

301-71.201 What are the reviewing official’s responsibilities?

Reviewing official ensures that:

- The claim is presented on an original voucher with an original date and signature
- Administrative data agrees with orders
- Original receipts for lodging/rental car are attached
- Advance and partial payments are indicated
- Confirmation numbers of non-availability are present
- Claim is reasonable, consistent with the mission, and charges are authorized on the travel order
- Rental car was appropriate and its cost was lowest available to the government
- Receipts support expenses
- Expenses are listed in both foreign and US currency, if applicable, showing the exchange rate and commission in effect at the time of the transaction
- Deviations were in the best interest of the government

301-71.204 Within how many calendar days after the submission of a proper travel claim must we reimburse the employee’s allowable expenses?

It is the employee’s responsibility to submit a proper travel voucher. The approving official should review and send the voucher to the finance/payment office as quickly as possible. Your finance/payment office **must** reimburse the employee within 30 calendar days after the employee submits a proper travel claim to the approving official. Your bureau **must** implement a satisfactory record keeping system to track submission of travel claims. For example, the voucher could be stamped with the date the approving official receives it from the employee for approval, or a document log can be maintained to record the date the voucher is received by the approving official.

You should default to the date the employee signs the voucher as the date the approving official receives it and begin to calculate the 30 calendar-day period from that date. Bureaus must have final record keeping procedures in place to track the date the approving official receives the claim.

301-71.208 Within how many calendar days after submission of the travel claim must we notify the employee of any errors in the claim?

The employee must be notified within seven calendar days after the travel voucher is submitted to the approving official if there are any errors in the claim that would prevent the payment being made within 30 calendar days. When the voucher is returned to the employee for corrections, the 30-day period stops. The employee must make the corrections and resubmit the claim to the approving official. The 30-day period starts over again with the re-submission. However, if the voucher is not returned to the employee within seven days for corrections, the additional time beyond seven days is a penalty to the finance/payment office. For example, if the voucher is not returned to the employee until ten days after submission, upon re-submission the bureau only has 27 days to pay the claim.

301-71.209 Must we pay a late payment fee if we fail to reimburse the employee within 30 calendar days after receipt of a proper voucher?

Yes, a late payment fee, in addition to the amount due the employee, must be paid. The fee may be paid separately from the reimbursement, and a separate object class code should be used to record the fee.

301-71.212 Should we report late payment fees as wages on a Form W-2?

No, IRS has determined that the late payment fee is in the nature of interest and not income. However, in accordance with IRS guidelines, you must issue the employee a Form-1099, Miscellaneous Income-Interest, by January 31 of the year following the calendar year in which the payments were made.

301-71.213 Is the additional fee, which is the equivalent to any late payment charge that the card contractor would have been able to charge had the employee not paid the bill, considered income?

Yes, this fee is considered income and would be reported on a Form W-2. However, Department employees are not charged late fees by the travel charge card contractor until the account becomes 120 calendar days delinquent and has been canceled. The Department is not liable for the payment of any late fees in these situations unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevented the reimbursement of the employee's claim within 30 days after a proper travel claim was submitted to the approving official. The employee must have followed the time frame requirements for the submission of travel vouchers; i.e., within 5 working days after the completion of the trip, or every 30 days if they are in a continuous travel status.

**301-76 Collection of Undisputed Delinquent Amounts Owed to the Contractor Issuing
the Individually Billed Travel Charge Card**

Subpart A General Rules

**301-76.1 May we collect undisputed delinquent amounts that an employee (including
members of the uniformed services) owes to a Government travel charge
card contractor?**

Yes, upon written request from the travel charge card contractor, you can collect undisputed amounts owed to them from the delinquent employee's disposable pay. Your bureau or operating unit human resources office must establish policies and procedures for the garnishment of wages for requests received from the travel charge card contractor. The human resources office will notify the National Finance Center (NFC) to make appropriate deductions. The NFC will promptly forward all amounts deducted to the travel charge card contractor.

Subpart B Policies and Procedures

**301-76.100 Are there any due process requirements with which we must comply before
collecting undisputed delinquent amounts on behalf of the charge card
contractor?**

Yes, your bureau must follow the due process requirements outlined in paragraph 301-76.100 of the FTR.

**301-76.101 Who is responsible for ensuring that all due process and legal requirements
have been met?**

Your bureau or operating unit is responsible for ensuring that all due process and legal requirements have been met before any undisputed delinquent amount has been deducted from an employee's salary.

CHAPTER 302–RELOCATION ALLOWANCES

Subchapter A Introduction

302-2 Employee Eligibility Requirements

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302-2.102(b) Who has the authority to approve a waiver of debt for relocation expenses when an employee does not remain in Government service for twelve months following the date of appointment?

302-2.102(b)(I) What format do I request a waiver of debt for relocation expenses?

302-2.102(c) Who has the authority to approve relocation expenses, including all entitlements, such as, house hunting, temporary quarters subsistence expense (TQSE), etc.?

302-2.102(d) Who authorizes relocation expenses when the new official station is less than 50 miles from the old official station?

302-2.102(e) Who has the authority to approve an extension of the two-year time limitation for completing residence transactions?

302-2.102(f) Who has the authority to waive limitations for employees relocating to/from isolated areas?

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PART 302-2--EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Subpart A--General Rules

302-2.1(a) What documentation is required before I incur any relocation expenses?

An approved travel order and a completed and signed service agreement, Form CD-150, Request for Authorization of Travel and Moving Expense” must be completed before any relocation expenses are incurred.

Subpart B--Agency Responsibilities

302-2.102(a) Who is responsible for providing me with full information regarding my relocation to a new duty station?

Prior to your reporting date at your new duty station, your servicing human resources officer is responsible for providing you with full relocation information concerning the benefits which may be available to you.

302-2.102(b) Who has the authority to approve a waiver of debt for relocation expenses when an employee does not remain in Government service for twelve months following the date of appointment?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or re-delegate the authority to approve a waiver of debt for relocation expenses when an employee does not remain in Government service for twelve months following the date of appointment.

302-2.102(b)(i) What format do I request a waiver of debt for relocation expenses?

A memorandum of request for waiver of debt for relocation expenses, specifying reasons beyond the employee’s control that are acceptable to your bureau, should be submitted by the approving official of the travel order, through the Line Office CFO, and submitted to your bureau CFO for approval.

302-2.102(c) Who has the authority to approve relocation expenses, including all entitlements, such as, house hunting, temporary quarters subsistence expense (TQSE), etc.?

Your relocation expenses must be authorized and approved by the appropriate official as listed in CTR, Chapter 301-2.4(c)), which can be re-delegated in accordance with CTR, Chapter 301-2.4(d) - Chapter 301-2.4(e). Officials

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authorized to approve travel orders have the responsibility to make sure that all travel orders are prepared properly in accordance with applicable Federal, Commerce, and their respective bureau's regulations.

302-2.102(d) Who authorizes relocation expenses when the new official station is less than 50 miles from the old official station?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or re-delegate the authority to approve relocation expenses when the new official station is less than 50 miles from the old official, subject to the criteria listed in *FTR*, *Chapter 302-2.6*.

302-2.102(e) Who has the authority to approve an extension of the two-year time limitation for completing residence transactions?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or re-delegate the authority to approve an extension of the two-year time limitation for completing residence transactions for up to an additional two-year period, not to exceed 4 years, Subject to the *FTR*, *Chapter 302-2.11* and *FTR*, *Chapter 302-11.22*.

302-2.102(f) Who has the authority to waive limitations for employees relocating to/from isolated areas?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary may waive limitations for employees relocating to/from isolated areas. This authority can be re-delegated. *See FTR, Chapter 302-2.106*.

302-2.102(g) Who has the authority to prescribe higher mileage rates OCONUS?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can prescribe and/or re-delegate the authority to prescribe higher mileage rates OCONUS, subject to the circumstances in *FTR*, *Chapter 302-4.302*.

302-2.102(h) Who has the authority to approve exceptions to driving less than the standard 300 miles per day?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or re-delegate the authority to approve exceptions to driving less than the standard 300 miles per day. *See FTR, Chapter 302-4.401*

302-2.102(m)

302-2.102(i) Who has the authority to approve the extension of TQSE beyond 60 days?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or re-delegate the authority to approve the extension of TQSE beyond 60 days, not to exceed 120 days, subject to the *FTR, Chapter 302-6.105 and CTR, Chapter 302-6*.

302-2.102(j) Who has the authority to approve the extension of temporary storage beyond 90 days?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or re-delegate the authority to approve an extension of temporary storage beyond 90 days, not to exceed 180 days, Subject to the *FTR, Chapter 302-7.8 and FTR, Chapter 302-7.9*.

02-2.102(k) Who has the authority to designate areas as isolated official stations?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary hold the authority to designate areas as isolated official stations. This delegation cannot be re-delegated.
See FTR, Chapter 302-8.101.

302-2.102(l) Who has the authority to approve transportation of a POV to a post of duty subsequent to the time of assignment?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or re-delegate the authority to approve transportation of a POV to a post of duty subsequent to the time of assignment, subject to the *FTR, Chapter 302-9.170 and FTR, Chapter 302-9.171*.

302-2.102(m) Who has the authority to approve the transportation of POV within CONUS?

Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or re-delegate the authority to approve transportation of a POV within CONUS, subject to the *FTR, Chapter 302-9.301*.

302-2.102(o)

302-2.102(n) Who has the authority to waive the maximum home value a bureau will pay for home sale services?

The maximum home value the Department will pay for home sale services is \$500,000. Office of Administrative Services (OAS) Travel Management Office will review any request to waive the \$500,000 maximum home value a bureau will pay for home sale services.

302-2.102(n)(i) In what format do I request a waiver of the maximum home value a bureau will pay for home sale services?

A memorandum of request for waiver of the maximum home value a bureau will pay for home sale services, along with a copy of the listing agreement and travel authorization should be submitted by the approving official of the travel order, through the Line Office CFO, and to OAS for approval.

302-2.102(o) Who has the authority to waive the 90-day waiting period in which I must independently market my home?

In cases of extreme hardship, Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary have the authority to waive the 90-day waiting period in which you must independently market your home.

**Subchapter C - PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION (PCS) ALLOWANCES FOR
SUBSISTENCE AND TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES**

PART 302-4--ALLOWANCES FOR SUBSISTENCE AND TRANSPORTATION

Subpart F - Use of More Than One POV

302-4.500(a) When am I authorized to use more than one POV for my en route travel?

Generally, use of no more than one POV is authorized as being advantageous. However, use of more than one POV may be authorized under one of the following circumstances:

- (1) If there are more members of the immediate family than reasonably can be transported with luggage in one vehicle;
- (2) If because of age of physical condition special accommodations are necessary in transporting a member of the immediate family in one vehicle, and a second automobile is required for travel of other members of the immediate family.
- (3) If an employee must report to a new official station in advance of travel by members of the immediate family who delay travel for acceptable reasons such as completion of school term, sale of property, settlement of personal business affairs, disposal or shipment of household goods, and temporary unavailability of adequate housing at the new official station;
- (4) If a member of the immediate family performs unaccompanied travel between authorized points other than those for the employee's travel; or
- (5) If, in advance of the employee's reporting date, immediate family members must travel to the new official station for acceptable reasons such as to enroll children in school at the beginning of the term.

**PART 302-6--ALLOWANCE FOR TEMPORARY QUARTERS
SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES (TQSE)**

Subpart A - General Rules

302-6.6(a) As a transferee, do I automatically qualify for a TQSE?

No. An administrative determination as to whether the occupancy of temporary quarters is necessary and the length of time for occupancy shall be made on a case-by-case basis.

302-6.7(a) What additional conditions must I meet in order to receive a TQSE allowance?

The period for TQSE shall be reduced or avoided if a house hunting trip has been made, or if, as a result of extended temporary duty at the new official station, the employee has had adequate opportunity to complete arrangements for permanent quarters.

302-6.9(a) Where do I show justification for payment of TQSE at other than the old and/or new official duty station?

Justification for allowing payment of TQSE at other than the old and/or new official duty station must be shown on the travel order.

Subpart B - Actual TQSE Method of Reimbursement

302-6.100(a) How do I claim actual TQSE?

Actual TQSE shall be itemized on Form CD-372, Expense Record for Temporary Quarters (see DOC, Chapter 300-4(z)). The CD-372 must be attached to the CD-370, Travel Voucher, to support the temporary quarters expenses being claimed. Receipts are required for all lodging expenses and for laundry and cleaning expenses, except when coin-operated facilities are used.

302-6.104(a) How is TQSE authorized?

(1) **Initial period of TQSE**: The authorization for TQSE and the length of time for occupancy shall be authorized in advance on the CD-29, Travel Order. All breaks in TQSE must be explained on the travel voucher or on the CD-372, Expense Record for Temporary Quarters.

(2) **Additional time of TQSE**: The travel order must be amended to indicate all extensions of TQSE. Authorizations to extend TQSE and the number of days authorized shall be held to a minimum. Additional time can only be authorized in circumstances where there are compelling reasons beyond the employee's control.

302-6.105(a) What are some reasons that are not considered as compelling the extension of TQSE?

Generally, the following are **NOT** considered compelling reasons to extend TQSE:

- (1) Poor housing market (as opposed to inadequate housing conditions;
- (2) General economic conditions of the old or new official duty station;
- (3) Personal financial concerns of the employee, e.g., a desire to receive a reimbursement or capital gain in a different tax year; and
- (4) Inability, for whatever reason, to sell residence.

Subchapter D - TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE OF PROPERTY

PART 302-7--TRANSPORTATION AND TEMPORARY STORAGE OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PROFESSIONAL BOOKS, PAPERS, AND EQUIPMENT (PBP&E)

Subpart A - General Rules

302-7.18(a) How do I submit a claim with the carrier for lost or damaged household goods?

The employee must first send a claim certified mail, return receipt requested, to the carrier for lost or damaged household goods. This can be accomplished by contacting the delivering carrier to acquire claim forms and a visit from the carrier's representative to inspect and verify loss or damage.

The employee should also mail a follow-up letter to the carrier to this effect. If loss or damage is observed as the carrier unloads and unpacks, the letter must be postmarked within 5 working days after delivery of the employee's household goods. If loss or damage is discovered by the employee while unpacking or after the carrier has completed delivery, the letter must be postmarked within 15 calendar days after the delivery of the household goods.

302-7.18(b) How soon will a carrier respond to a claim for lost or damaged household goods?

If shipment was made under the Commercial bill of lading (CBL) method, the carrier is required to acknowledge claims within 10 days after receipt. If shipment was made under the commuted rate system, the carrier is required to acknowledge claims within 30 days after receipt. The carrier is required to pay, decline, or offer a compromise settlement within 120 days after receipt unless there are reasons beyond its control which prevent settlement.

302-7.18(c) What are my options if I am not satisfied with the carrier's settlement?

In the event of unsatisfactory settlement with the carrier, the employee can file a claim with the Government under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employee's Claims Act of 1964 (31 U.S.C. 3721). The employee should complete Form CD-224, Employee Claim for Loss of or Damage to Personal Property.

Employees should follow the procedures established in DAO 203-17 for filing claims. Employees should also refer to the General Services Administration (GSA) pamphlet entitled "Shipping Your Household Goods" for further information on filing claims. Employees can obtain the pamphlet from their servicing transportation specialist or via the following web-site: <http://www.r6.gsa.gov/fsstt/hhg/MovingGuideRevisedF.pdf>.

302-7.18(d)

302-7.18(d) Who approves my claim for lost or damaged household goods when it exceeds \$5000?

Operating unit claims officers have the authority to process claims and submit vouchers for payment. All claims equal to or exceeding \$5,000 shall be forwarded to the Department's Assistant General Counsel for Administration for final review. Upon notification of the Office of General Counsel's approval, the claims officer will submit a voucher for payment.

302-12.7(a)

PART 302-12--USE OF A RELOCATION SERVICES COMPANY

Subpart A - Employee's Use of a Relocation Services Company

302-12.1(a) What individuals are eligible for home sale services?

Relocation services may be made available to employees whose transfer from one official station to another is determined to be **in the interest of the Government** and is not primarily for the convenience or benefit of the employee or at the employee's request.

Operating units and Department offices (bureaus) may elect not to offer the home sale services to their employees. **All** eligible transferring employees of a bureau who does not offer the home sale services shall be relocated in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation, (FTR), Part 302-11. If a bureau does choose to offer the services, it shall be made available to **all** eligible transferring employees of that bureau.

302-12.1(b) What individuals are not eligible for home sale services?

The following individuals are not eligible for home sale services:

- (1) New appointees, including Presidential appointees and new appointees to shortage category and Senior Executive Service positions;
- (2) Employees assigned under the Government Employees Training Act;
- (3) Employees assigned or transferred to or from a post of duty in a foreign area except employees eligible for reimbursement of residence transactions expenses as provided in FTR 302-11.2 (b);
- (4) Foreign Service Officers and members of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Corps; and
- (5) Employees who have not completed marketing their residences for 60 days of the 90-day listing period, unless they have been granted a waiver in accordance with Commerce Travel Regulation (CTR) 302-2.102(o).

302-12.7(a) Under what circumstances will the Government pay only a proportional share of the contract?

An employee will not be eligible for home sale services if any of the following circumstances exist, unless all owners satisfy the Government and the relocation company (contractor) of their willingness and ability to pay their proportional shares of the contract cost directly to the contractor. The Government will pay only a proportional share of the contract cost when:

301-12.7(c)

- (1) Non-family members own a share in the residence. Divorced or legally separated spouses, at the time the employee is notified of his/her move or at the settlement date, who own a share in the employee's residence, will be considered an unrelated joint owner;
- (2) The residence is a duplex or another type of multiple occupancy dwelling which is owned by an employee or his/her immediate family and is only partially occupied by an employee. This restriction would not apply to a case where an employee owns a condominium apartment; and/or
- (3) Any residence that is used as income-producing property. The employee must pay a prorated portion of the fee for any part of the residence that is used as income-producing property.

302-12.7(b) How will the fee charged by the contractor be prorated under the circumstances listed in CTR, 302-12.7(a)?

The Fee charged by either the contractor or through direct reimbursement will be prorated for you based on each owner's interest in the property to be sold. The Department will pay only the portion attributable to the employee and his/her immediate family. Any part of the fee which is not the responsibility of the Department will either be deducted from the employee's equity or be paid by the employee at settlement.

301-12.7(c) What types of properties are not eligible for home sale services?

The following properties are not eligible for home sale services:

- (1) Homes that are not insurable;
- (2) Mobile homes (whether or not affixed to real property owned by the employee);
- (3) Cooperatives;
- (4) Homes which contain buried, improperly abandoned oil tanks and homes contaminated by toxic substances, such as radon gas and/or toxic mold;
- (5) Homes with synthetic stucco;
- (6) Houseboats;
- (7) Homes on which construction has not been completed;

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(8) Homes that are not adequately serviced by potable water or sanitary waste facilities, as defined by the applicable state and local standards for water and sanitary waste services;

(9) Homes that cannot be financed;

(10) Homes that do not comply with other applicable state or local codes, such as building, health and fire codes, provided conditions resulting in such noncompliance are documented in accordance with said state or local codes. It is the employee's responsibility to bring the property to code at his/her own expense. If the repairs are not corrected within 30 calendar days, the property will be ineligible for the home sale services; and

(11) Any commercial property, for example, working farms, self storage facilities, and store front properties.

302-12.11 What are the approving official's, for the hiring organization, responsibilities for relocation services?

The approving official's, for the hiring organization, responsibilities for relocation services are as follows:

(a) Notify the relocating employee in writing of the required reporting date at the new duty station as far in advance as possible. Employees should be given a minimum of 30 days advance notice unless unusual circumstances prevail. The employee should be provided a copy of CTR, Chapter 302-12 and any other material related to relocation allowances;

(b) Notify the Relocation Services Coordinator (RSC) **immediately** when a relocation will include the buying and selling of real estate upon official written notification of the job offer;

(c) Ensure that Federal, Department, and bureau relocation and travel policy is clearly communicated to new hires and transferring employees;

(d) Ensure that employees complete and sign a CD-150, Request for Authorization of Travel and Moving Expenses, before a CD-29, Travel Order is prepared. Approving officials should be reasonably certain that the residence address shown on the CD-150 is the dwelling from which the employee commuted to the old duty station on a daily or regular basis. The approving official may seek the assistance of the organization from which the employee is being hired or transferred in making this determination. See FTR, Chapter 302-11.100;

302-12.13

(e) Prepare a travel order, for a relocation that correctly authorizes the employee those allowances to which he/she is entitled. The travel order should obligate funds for the direct sale of the employee's residence at the old official duty station. If the employee chooses to enter the home sale services program after 60 days, the travel order should be amended to reverse this obligation. The RSC will create a new obligation with the processing of the CD-404, Supply, Equipment or Service Order (purchase order). However, if the employee receives an outside offer to purchase their residence between the 60th and 90th day, the travel order shall be amended again to obligate the direct sale of the residence;

(f) Ensure that proper care is taken in preparing the travel order to avoid possible suspension of contractor services to the employee, and/or possible collection from the employee for fees paid by the Government to the contractor for services rendered to an ineligible employee;

(g) Ensure that the travel order, CD-150, and listing agreement, are completed promptly and that the appropriate copies are forwarded to the RSC so that the employee can be enrolled in the relocation program; and

(h) Coordinate employee requests for additional allowances or an extension of allowances already authorized (e.g., house-hunting, temporary quarters) with the RSC. This will allow the approving official to confirm that full advantage is being taken of the contractor's services and that additional or unnecessary expenses will not be incurred by the hiring organization. Employees are encouraged to use the home finding assistance services provided at no cost by the contractor to assist them in locating a new residence.

302-12.12 What are the ASCs responsibilities for relocation services?

Directors of the ASCs will designate an RSC and at least one alternate RSC to provide counseling and coordination of services to the relocating employee. Hiring organizations will use the services of the RSC at the ASC that generally provides their organization with administrative services.

302-12.13 What are the RSC's responsibilities for relocation services?

The RSC's responsibilities for relocation services include:

(a) Ensuring that only eligible employees are referred to the contractor;

(b) Informing the employee of the types of services available from the contractor;

(c) Ensuring that the employee has marketed their home for at least 60 days of the 90 day period before entering them in the home sale program;

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- (d) Ensuring that the employee forwards you a copy of the listing agreement which contains the listing date and the exclusion clause, a copy of an approved travel order, and a completed and approved CD-150, before a purchase order can be submitted to the contractor.
- (e) Preparing and submitting a purchase order to the contractor once the employee has listed their home for 60 days;
- (f) Notifying the contractor to place the home sale services on hold if the employee receives an outside offer between the 60th and 90th day. If the sale of the residence was not completed, the RSC will notify the contractor to continue with the home sale services;
- (g) Monitoring the progress of each employee's relocation until the authorized services are completed and invoiced;
- (h) Monitoring expected and actual costs for each employee's relocation and when necessary, initiating amendments to the purchase order;
- (I) Notifying the hiring organization of the amount of the obligation being established for the relocation services ordered by properly distributing copies of the purchase order;
- (j) Reviewing invoice(s) and ensuring payment within the terms of the Prompt Payment Act;
- (k) Acting as a liaison between the employee and the contractor for questions and problem resolution relating to services provided by the contractor. Any questions or problems that cannot be resolved by the contractor should be brought to the attention of the RSC for resolution. If the problem cannot be resolved at that level, the RSC should notify the Office of Administrative Services (OAS) Travel Department Program Coordinator. If the situation requires a technical decision or a contracting officer's decision, the Department Coordinator will resolve the issue with the GSA. The Department Coordinator will be available to provide technical guidance and assistance to the RSCs; and
- (l) Verifying that the contractor is performing in accordance with the terms of the contract and reporting violations to OAS.

302-12.14 What are my responsibilities for relocation services?

Your responsibilities for relocation services include:

- (a) Completing and signing a CD-150 which will indicate the services and allowances that you will require during the transfer. Before completing the CD-150, the employee

should contact the individual indicated at the top of the CD-150 or the RSC located in the region of the employee's new duty station to determine if home sale services is available to employees transferring to that bureau and for information concerning the relocation services provided by the contractor;

(b) Forwarding the CD-150 to your approving official so that a travel order, can be prepared. Employees should not take any actions or incur any expenses related to the transfer until a travel order has been properly authorized;

(c) Knowing the conditions and requirements that must be met for eligibility of relocation services and other relocation allowances. If you have questions concerning your entitlements, you will need to call your contact/personnel office of the gaining bureau and/or your servicing RSC;

(d) Marketing your residence through a multiple-listing service for a 90-day period as soon as possible after receiving written notification of selection or transfer. Employees must market their residences for a 90-day period or complete 60 days of the 90-day period before becoming eligible for home sale services. If requested, the contractor will provide home marketing assistance to the employee at no additional cost;

(e) Forwarding a copy of the listing agreement and “exclusion clause”, which for eligibility purposes will contain the 90-day listing period, to your approving official;

(f) Forwarding an "exclusion clause" to your broker. All listing agreements must contain an exclusion clause which allows you to cancel the listing with the broker and protects you from a claim for a real estate commission in the event the home is sold to the contractor. Failure to include this clause could cause you to be liable for a non-reimbursable brokerage commission;

(g) Continuing to market your home independently to attempt to receive a better offer than through an appraised value sale once the initial 90-day listing period has ended. This would entitle the employee to the amended value sales provision of the contract, providing a greater payment to the employee, and reducing the fee charged to the Government by the contractor;

(h) Filing for direct reimbursement of residence sale costs, under Part 302-11, if your home does not sell under relocation services;

(I) Notifying the RSC when your residence has not sold after 60 days of the 90-day period to request entrance into the home sale services program;

(j) Notifying the RSC when an outside offer is received between the 60th and 90th day. If an outside offer is accepted and the sale is completed, you will need to file for direct reimbursement of residence sale costs. You will need to notify your RSC if the sale of

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the residence was not completed and request that the RSC continue with the home sale services; and

(k) Having the following documents/information available and not stored or shipped with household goods: (a) deed of trust or promissory note, (b) legal description of the property, (c) copy of the survey, (d) title insurance policy, (e) home owner's warranty (if applicable), (f) mortgage/lender information; i.e., name, address, telephone number, account number, loan pay-off information, (g) property tax receipts and current tax bill, (h) home owner's association or condominium association information and documents (if applicable), (I) warranties for appliances that remain in the home, and (j) building permits (if applicable).

302-12.15 What are Finance's responsibilities for relocation services?

Finance's responsibilities for relocation services include:

(a) Reviewing invoice(s) and ensuring payment within the terms of the Prompt Payment Act; and

(b) Ensuring that the employees are not reimbursed for direct reimbursement of residence sale costs when they have successfully sold their home under relocation services.

302-12.16 What are OAS's responsibilities for relocation services?

OAS's responsibilities for relocation services include:

(a) Issue and interpret Department policy regarding relocation issues;

(b) Serve as the primary liaison among GSA, the contractors, and the RSC; and

(c) Coordinate and disseminate information regarding relocation services.

302-12.17 When authorized, what relocation services are available to me?

The Department is a mandatory user of the contract for Government-wide relocation services issued by the GSA. This policy supplements the terms and conditions established under that contract. The contract provides for home marketing assistance, appraised value, amended value, amending from zero value, home finding assistance, mortgage counseling, and optional services.

302-12.18 How soon will the contractor notify me once I've made it known to my RSC that I'm interested in relocation services?

Within one workday after the RSC notifies the contractor of the employee's interest or intention to use the contractor's services, the contractor's relocation counselor will contact the employee and describe in detail the home sale services and the other services available. The initial contact with the transferring employee will be by telephone, and will be followed up in writing within five working days. At this time, the contractor will provide the employee with applicable publications describing the services offered, as well as internet access to their relocation sites.

302-12.19 What services will the contractor provide under home marketing assistance?

Home Marketing Assistance. The contractor will provide assistance, free of charge, to employees wishing to sell their homes at the old duty station, either in conjunction with the home sale services provision or independently. These services will include:

- (a) Developing a marketing strategy, suggesting a listing price, and an estimate of the probable selling price and terms;
- (b) Recommending repairs and/or improvements that will enhance the sale-ability of the property. The cost of any recommended repairs and related expenses will be borne by the employee and not reimbursed by the Government;
- (c) Providing the employee a recommended broker to use in listing the property for sale, if requested by the employee;
- (d) Advising the employee on managing the property sale and working with a broker; and
- (e) Advising the employee on negotiating with potential buyers and evaluating any offers received.

302-12.20 What services will the contractor provide under home sale services?

 The **home sale services** provision includes the appraised value sale, the amended value sale, and the amending from zero sale as set forth below.

302-12.21 How do I enter the home sale program?

In order to enter the home sale program once you have received written notification of selection or transfer, you must:

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- (a) **market your residence** through a multiple-listing service for a 90-day period before you become eligible for home sale services. The 90-day period begins with the date on a listing agreement. In cases of extreme hardship, Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary have the authority to waive the 90-day waiting period; and
- (b) **notify the RSC when the residence has not been sold after 60 days** of the 90-day period, and request entrance into the home sale program at that time. Notification will prompt the RSC to notify the contractor to start the appraisal process.

302-12.22 What is the appraisal process?

- (a) After receipt of the official order for services, the contractor will contact the employee to discuss the **appraisal process** and provide the employee with a list of qualified, certified appraisers. **Employees shall:**
 - (1) **select two appraisers and an alternate from a list of appraisers** within the geographical area provided by the relocation firm. The list of qualified appraisers provided by the relocation firms shall contain only appraisers who are qualified residential appraisers.

Employees may request the contractor to use a fully qualified appraiser of the employee's choice, who is not on the list provided by the relocation firm. This appraiser shall not be a Government employee, have a vested interest in the property, or appraised the property within the last six months. Appraisals shall be conducted according to the Employee Relocation Council (E.C.) appraisal guidelines, using the E.C. appraisal form. All appraisers are to have achieved professional designation or be certified through nationally recognized organizations such as the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers and/or the Society of Real Estate Appraisers; and
 - (2) **complete and sign a disclosure statement** prior to the performance of any appraisals or inspections on the property.
- (b) Upon notification of the employee's selection of appraisers, receipt of the disclosure statement, and official purchase order, **the contractor shall:**
 - (1) **arrange for two independent appraisals of the property.** These appraisals are to be made on the property in "as is" condition;
 - (2) **arrange for a third independent appraisal when the two appraisals differ by more than 5%** of the higher appraisal. The third appraisal will also be completed within the 30 working day time frame; and

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(3) **order a title search and inspections required by state or local laws** (may include termite, well, septic, and radon gas inspections). All reports and any inspections requested must be executed within 30 days from the date of the employee's selection of the appraisers, receipt of the disclosure statement by the contractor or receipt of the official order for services, whichever is later.

(c) If the RSC is convinced that local conditions preclude completion of the appraisals and/or inspections within 30 working days, **the RSC may grant a reasonable extension of time to complete the process**. This extension shall not exceed an additional 15 working day period.

302-12.23 What is the process for appraised value sale?

(a) Within two working days of completion of the appraisal process (approximately 30 working days from the inspection date) **the contractor shall** make the employee a verbal **appraised value offer** to purchase the property. The contractor's offer will be based on the average of the two appraisals, or an average of the two closest appraisals when a third appraisal is ordered.

(b) The employee will have 60 days from the date the contractor makes the offer to either accept or reject the offer. **The employee may:**

(1) **accept** the appraised value offer; or

(2) **continue to independently market** the home during the acceptance period and, if successful, amend the appraised value offer; or

(3) **reject the contractor's offer** and be reimbursed for residence sale expenses under FTR 302-11. If the employee rejects the contractor's offer, the home shall no longer be eligible for participation in the home sale services portion of the contract, and the employee will not be reimbursed for any charges (inspection fees, appraisal fees, etc.) which are identical to the costs paid to the contractor. NOTE: If the employee does not accept within the 60-day period, it will be considered an automatic rejection of the offer. The contractor will provide the employee with copies of any appraisals or inspections performed. However, these documents may not be acceptable by other parties associated with a direct sale; or

(4) **request a reevaluation of the appraisals**, based on errors of fact, or comparable properties not included in the original appraisals.

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302-12.24 What is the reevaluation of the appraisal process?

Employees have 60 calendar days from the date of a telephone or written offer to accept or reject the contractor's appraised value offer. If the employee takes exception with the appraised value offer, the employee may request a reevaluation of the appraisals. Since the contractor is required to make an offer based solely on appraisals by independent appraisers, the success of the reevaluation of the appraisal process depends on additional considerations which convince the appraiser(s) to change the appraised value. The following are guidelines to make the reevaluation of the appraisal process more successful:

(a) The employee should file a written reevaluation of the appraisal process within 30 days of receipt of the appraised value offer, after carefully reviewing the written appraisal and reports. The reevaluation of the appraisal process must be completed prior to the expiration of the 60 calendar day acceptance period;

(b) Disputing the appraiser's subjective judgment will generally not be successful. The employee should instead focus the reevaluation on identifying any factual errors in the appraisal or inspection report(s) and/or providing better information regarding comparable home sales in the employee's neighborhood. Additionally, the reevaluation should identify each specific error in the appraisal or inspection report(s) with an explanation as to why the item listed is in error. The appraiser(s) will then reconsider the value based on the information available; and

(c) The employee should specifically request that the appraiser's response be in writing and that it address each of the employee's concerns.

302-12.25 What should I do if I receive an outside offer to purchase my residence before appraisals are completed?

If you receive an outside offer to purchase your residence **prior** to completion of the appraisals or the 90 day marketing requirement:

(a) proceed to sell your residence under the **direct reimbursement method** as authorized in Part 302-11. Employees must notify the RSC if an offer is received during this period. The RSC will instruct the contractor to place the home sale services on hold.

If you are able to close on the outside offer, you will notify the RSC to cancel the home sale services and file a claim for direct reimbursement of residence sale transaction costs on a travel voucher. The Department will reimburse the contractor for any expenses incurred that are allowable under the GSA contract. If the sale of the residence was not completed, you will notify the RSC to continue with the home sale services. Employees who enter the program after 60 days, will not be eligible for

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reimbursement of any costs incurred which are identical to the costs paid to the contractor. Employees must continue to market their residence for the entire 90-day period; or

(b) after the completion of the 90 day marketing requirement, notify the contractor who will review the offeror's terms and counsel the employee throughout the negotiation of the offer. The contractor shall obtain a broker's market analyses which will serve as a benchmark of market value to help determine the reasonableness of the outside offer. Financing must be available to the prospective offerors. If the employee is satisfied with the net sale amount of the offer, the contractor may make a guaranteed offer to purchase the property (**amending from zero sale**) provided:

(1) the contractor determines the offer to be bonafide;

(2) the broker's market analysis indicates it is a reasonable offer; and

(3) the employee should not sign any papers with the proposed offeror or accept any money.

302-12.26 What will the contractor do when I receive an outside offer to purchase my residence after appraisals are completed?

When you receive an outside offer to purchase your residence **after** appraisals are completed that is equal to or greater than the contractor offer, the contractor will amend the offer to you for the larger net amount (**amended value sale**). Offers received by you during this period must be forwarded to the contractor for verification before the offer is accepted. The employee should not sign any papers with the proposed offeror or accept any money.

302-12.27 Can I receive any of the equity out of my house prior to acceptance of offer?

Yes. Prior to acceptance of offer, the contractor may advance up to 75% of your estimated equity via wire transfer or corporate check, based on the appraised value offer, if you request such an advance for the purpose of purchasing a home at the new duty station. You will be required to provide a signed sales agreement.

302-12.28 How is equity secured when advanced to me prior to acceptance of offer?

The equity advanced to you may be secured by a second deed of trust or other security which the contractor deems satisfactory. The equity advance shall be deducted from the employee's equity upon the contractor's acquisition of the property. The contractor's cost of money or any other administrative charges will not be charged to the employee or to the Government.

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In the event that you do not accept the contractor's appraised value offer, the contractor may use normal legal recourse if you fail to repay amounts advanced. Furthermore, in the event that you do not accept the contractor's offer, the contractor may charge you an administrative fee. The Government shall not accept responsibility for repayment of the amount advanced and the contractor shall have no legal recourse against the Government if you fail to pay the amounts advanced.

302-12.29 What percentage of the equity will be advanced to me at the time of acceptance of offer?

If you:

(a) **vacate the property** at the time of acceptance of offer, the contractor will pay you **100%** of the equity via wire transfer or corporate check within five working days after receipt of acceptance and execution of the Contract of Sale by the contractor; or

(b) **do not vacate the property** at the time of acceptance of offer, the contractor will pay you **95%** of the calculated equity via wire transfer or corporate check within five working days after receipt of acceptance and execution of the Contract of Sale by the contractor. In order to receive the equity, the sales price executed by you must exceed the outstanding mortgage balance and other encumbrances. The balance will be paid to you once you have vacated the property;

302-12.30 What am I responsible for when the appraised value offer is less than my mortgage balance?

At the same time of the execution of the contract of sale, you must pay the contractor the deficit when the appraised value offer is less than your mortgage balance, via certified check or cashier's check.

302-12.31 How will a vacate date be established?

A vacate date will be established when the employee accepts the contractor's offer. The date will be no later than 45 days from the date of acceptance of the offer. This date may be extended in exceptional cases when approved in advance by the contractor and the RSC. The employee will be responsible for maintaining the property in substantially the same condition as when appraised and for paying all maintenance, utility, insurance, and related costs for the property during the occupancy period. If the property is occupied by renters, the renters must vacate prior to the employee accepting the contractor's offer.

302-12.32 When does the contractor acquire the property?

The contractor will acquire the property on the date the employee vacates or the date of acceptance of the sales contract, whichever is later. After this date the contractor is the sole beneficial owner of the property and bears all the burdens of ownership, including expenses related to maintaining, insuring and disposing of the home. The contractor will formally assume responsibility for all financial obligations and ensure the employee's credit record is protected. Neither the Government nor the employee shall be liable for any damage, loss, acts of God, or any other occurrence subsequent to this date.

302-12.33 Will the contractor provide any type of home finding assistance?

Yes. The contractor will provide employees, including those not selling a home, with individual counseling services to familiarize the employee with information regarding the real estate market (including rental properties, schools, taxes, commuting, community life, etc.) at the new official duty station free of charge. This information will be tailored to the individual needs of the relocating employee. Specific home finding assistance includes:

(a) **Rental assistance.** The contractor will provide information on the desired location, rental price range preferred, and the relocation time schedule. This information will be transmitted to personnel of a reputable rental agency, who will contact and counsel the employee. Rental assistance counseling will include (1) sending the employee a relocation information kit, (2) preparing a home hunting itinerary and scheduling appointments with the rental agent, (3) discussing the rights and obligations of the renter, including the requirements of lease agreements, prior to the showing of available rental units, (4) orienting the employee to the typical rentals within a suitable commuting distance, and (5) discussing the typical deposit requirements.

The contractor will not charge, nor will the Government reimburse a separate fee for rental assistance. If, in the local market, rental agencies or agents customarily charge individuals a fee for finding rentals, the employee will be liable for payment of the fee. The contractor will inform the employee of any obligation for fees **before services are provided**; and

(b) **Buyer's assistance.** The contractor will provide information on the desired location, purchase price range preferred, and housing needs of the family at the destination location. Based on the information provided by the employee, the contractor will select a reputable broker in the destination area and provide a complete profile of the employee's preferences.

The broker will provide buyer assistance counseling which will include

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(1) screening the available homes in the area and contacting the employee to familiarize him/her with information regarding the location area, (2) sending the employee a relocation information kit containing specific data on the new area, (3) preparing a house hunting itinerary, scheduling appointments to view the available properties, and acquainting the employee and spouse with points of interest in the new area, and (4) assisting in the preparation of the proper contacts and negotiating the purchase according to local custom once a suitable property has been selected.

The contractor will not charge, nor will the Government pay the contractor, a fee for buyer's assistance. Real estate broker fees are customarily paid by the seller of the property and not the buyer. However, if a particular broker or market area requires payment of other fees, the employee will be liable for payment of the fees. The contractor will inform the employee of any obligation for fees **before services are provided**. Certain fees or expenses may be reimbursable to the employee under the home purchase regulations in FTR 302-11.

302-12.34 Will the contractor provide any type of mortgage counseling?

Yes. The contractor will counsel the employee on nationwide and local mortgage programs that meet the employee's financial objective and qualifications. This counseling is free of charge and will include:

- (a) Providing information on the types of mortgages available, rates, fees, lender qualification requirements, and relative availability of financing in the new area;
- (b) Qualifying the employee, prior to the house hunting trip, for mortgage amount and monthly payment, without the employee's obligation to pay an application fee;
- (c) Referring the employee to national and local lending sources, to enable the employee to compare financing available and select a mortgage product and lender that meets the requirements of the employee; and
- (d) Providing the employee assistance in applying for a mortgage and monitoring the progress of the application until approval is obtained.

The contractor is not required to provide the actual financing to the employee. Any financing actually provided by the contractor will be considered "Optional Services".

302-12.35 What do optional services cover?

Optional services are services provided by relocation service contractors which are not covered by the Government contract. The contractor may advise the employee of these services and their cost. The employee will be solely responsible for any obligation to the contractor for these services. The employee will be required to sign a statement to

302-12.111(a)

this effect prior to entering into an agreement for optional services. The Government **will not** pay for these services.

302-12.111(a) What is the maximum home value my agency will pay for home sale services?

The maximum home value the Department will pay for home sale services is \$500,000. The portion of a fee for any residence that exceeds \$500,000 is the responsibility of the employee, unless approved by a waiver. See CTR, Chapter 302-2.102(n) and Chapter 302-2.102.(n)(I) for maximum home value waivers.

COMMERCE TRAVEL REGULATION - INTERIM DRAFT

Chapter 304 – Acceptance of Payment from a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expenses

304-1.3(a)(1)

CHAPTER 304 – PAYMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSE FROM A NON-FEDERAL SOURCE

Subchapter A Employee Acceptance of Payment From a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expense

304-1 Authority

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.CHAPTER 304 – PAYMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSE FROM A NON-FEDERAL SOURCE

Subchapter A Employee Acceptance of Payment From a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expense

304-1.1 Authority

304-1.1(a) By what authority may I accept a payment and/or payment in kind from an outside source?

The authority for accepting a payment or payment in kind is the Department's gift statute, 15 U.S.C. 1522, or for payments from non-Federal sources for a Federal employee to attend a meeting or similar function, the Ethics in Government Act, 31 U.S.C. 1353, and must conform to requirements set forth in Department Administrative Order (DAO) 203-9.

COMMERCE TRAVEL REGULATION - INTERIM DRAFT

Chapter 304 – Acceptance of Payment from a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expenses

304-1.3(d)(1)

304-1.3 Policy

304-1.3(a)(1) How is acceptance of a payment and/or payment in kind from an outside source authorized?

Acceptance of payment and/or payment in kind from a non-Federal source will be specifically authorized in advance on a travel order or post approved on a travel voucher. In addition, Form CD-210, Record of Gift or Bequest, and SF-326, Acceptance of Payment from a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expenses will both be prepared when travel gifts received from a non-Federal source for travel, subsistence, and related expenses which totals more than \$250 per event, and will be approved in accordance with DAO 203-9. Form CD-342, Record of Gifts and Decorations from Foreign Governments, will be prepared when the gift is from a foreign government, and approved in accordance with DAO 202-739. *NOTE: The officials authorized to accept gifts and bequests shall in each instance appropriately acknowledge in writing to the donor the acceptance of the gift and bequest.*

304-1.3(a)(2) What does finance require upon completion of a trip where an outside source provided payment and/or payment in kind?

Upon completion of travel, you are required to submit the following information to their servicing finance office anytime an outside source provides payment and/or payment in kind:

- 1) A travel voucher even if the trip involved is no cost to the Department.
- 2) Receipts where receipts are normally required. For payment in kind, employees will obtain receipts from the donor.
- 3) Any check(s) accepted from the donor.
- 4) Form CD-210 or, if the travel is received from a foreign government, Form CD-342.

NOTE: The servicing finance office will prepare accounting records and reports, and will submit CD-210s and SF-326s semi-annually to the Office of General Counsel (OGC) for submission to the Office of Government Ethics.

304-1.3(a)(3) May I accept cash from an outside source?

No. **Under no circumstances** may you accept cash from an outside source. Payment from an outside source to cover all or part of your travel expenses must be paid in the form of a check made payable to the Department of Commerce. Normally, the donor will mail a check to your servicing finance office. However, checks made payable to you will be immediately endorsed over to the Department and will be returned to the servicing finance officer.

COMMERCE TRAVEL REGULATION - INTERIM DRAFT

Chapter 304 – Acceptance of Payment from a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expenses

304-1.3(b)(1)

304-1.3(b)(1) May I be reimbursed for expenses that exceed maximum per diem rates and/or transportation expenses when paid for by an outside source or may I accept in-kind payments that exceed in value per diem rates and/or transportation expenses?

Yes, when an outside source makes full payment in excess of normal regulatory requirements, your travel expenses may be reimbursed the costs of the full travel expense; or the outside source may provide in-kind travel payment, with the following exception. You may not be reimbursed for first-class transportation or accept in-kind first class transportation to attend a meeting or similar function unless you are authorized for such transportation under the FTR and such travel is being provided to similarly-situated attendees at the meeting or similar function.

However, your maximum subsistence expenses when in a foreign area may not exceed allowances authorized by the Secretary of State. Furthermore, if the costs of the amount being reimbursed or the in-kind travel expense being provided exceeds authorized amounts as set forth in the FTR by more than \$500, the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration must approve acceptance of the travel gift.

When being reimbursed for full payment in excess of normal regulatory requirements, you must submit, along with your travel voucher and other applicable information, documentation verifying that the sponsor has reimbursed the Department for the entire amount. Reimbursement to you for expenses in excess of regulatory limitations shall not, in any case, exceed the amount of expenses incurred.